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NEW YORK **NEW YORK** **NEW YORK**

Seized with immeasurable neurotic dread.

As the Airman would say: "Much more research needed into the crucial problem - group organization." Meadelson feels that energy like this is "a projection of the Airman's (Auden's) contradictory desire for order and no order at once." But where does he find Auden at all in such poems? Granted his near-obsession with organization and meaning, and with the importance, which he often stressed, of a subject, the fact remains that the personality and behaviour of the Airman exist only as a secret excitement or gleam. In "Consider" it seems likely that the rumour 'horribly in its capacity to disgust' is in fact connected with homosexuality, and the secret group knowledge that goes with it. But this again is a case of Auden's talent for disappearing not only into the overwhelming atmosphere of the poem but into the general sense of apprehension and impending disaster ("It is later than you think") which the poem has conjured up.

The ideal Auden poem of this date always moves outward to a public scene imagined in its significant details and observed as if from the air or by radio ("Supplied elsewhere to farmers and their dogs / Sitting in kitchens in the stormy fens"). The torn-up paper is reminiscent of the famous shot in *Things to Come*, where the camera focuses on a ragged scrap of newspaper caught on wire, giving news of ultimate war horrors. The image of the helmeted airman, with his lordly perspective, is superb but farcical, too, just as his exhortation is also a spell of comfort against the horrors that a demoralized society imagines are awaiting it. Auden's poetry is deeply aware that the group want both to be thrilled by their hard and to joke with him, and that the ideal shaman is both a power and a figure of fun. The Airman is related to the curious persona of "Mother" which Auden adopted socially in his late maturity, when in addition to the role defined in "Your mother knows best" he would present mother as a clown figure, reciting the first line of Spenser's poem as "Your old mother thinks continually of them that are truly great". Reading Benedict and Malinowski, the young Auden was no doubt well aware of the function of this kind of thing in group anthropology: the fear of mothers or hears was negated by the shaman taking on their role.

Mendelson quotes a letter written in 1932 in which Auden revealed the source of *The Orators*, probably with a touch of parody of Eliot's notes to *The Waste Land*:

The genesis of the book was a paper written by an anthropologist friend of mine about ritual epilepsy among the Trobriand Islanders, linking it up with the flying powers of witches, sexual abnormalities etc.

The friend was John Layard, who had shot himself through the head in Berlin two years before, out of jealousy over a boy Auden was also interested in. Amazingly he failed to kill himself and was taken to hospital by Auden, after which he made a full recovery. Despite his depressions and instability he was a remarkable theorist and original thinker, and the papers he wrote for the *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* - "Flying Tricklesters, Ghosts, Gods and Epileptics", and "Shamanism: an Analysis Based on the Flying Tricklesters of Malakula" - are the specific influences behind *The Orators*, mixed with the doctrines of D. H. Lawrence and the personality of T. E. Lawrence, and with the image of a revolutionary hero that came from Lenin and the early romance of Nazism and *Fuehrerprinzip*.

Together with the parade *Paul on Both Sides*, *The Orators* developed the Auden technique later adopted in the plays he wrote with Isherwood, exotic and mythical matter from the past and present and transposed into the group life of English schools and homes. Such a transposition was standard practice among the modernists - Eliot had used it in *The Waste Land* - but Auden gave it not only the special emphasis of a group among initiates but a corresponding and disarming frivolity, (though *Paul on Both Sides* is significantly more serious, and more moving, than *The Orators*). As usual there is a discrepancy, particularly grotesque in the later case, between the image of

the work of art and what the artist and his critics have said about it. Auden wrote to Naomi Mitchison that "the theme was the failure of the romantic conception of personality", and expressing dissatisfaction to another correspondent he said the result was "far too obscure and equivocal" - what was intended as a critique of the Fascist outlook might be interpreted as a favourable exposition. That indeed is one reason why *The Orators* comes off as well as it does, for Mendelson emphasizes that however much the early Auden wanted to respond "positively" to the challenge of the time and become the young poet spokesman for enlightenment and left-wing ideals, his art would not oblige. The group was essential to it, the cause was not. And neither was the Message. However much he tinkered with *The Ascent of F6*, the end remained a muddle, though the individual speeches and poems are as effective, and compared with its group liveness the satire of *The Dog Beneath the Skin* operates on the most elementary level.

The most significant comment on *The Orators* was made by Auden himself in a preface to a new edition in 1966. He cannot, he says, "think myself back into the frame of mind in which I wrote it. My name on the title page seems a pseudonym for someone else, someone talented but near the border of sanity, who might well in a year or two become a Nazi." His central theme, he then felt, was hero-worship, but had he ever been a hero-worshiper? Had he in fact, before he went to America and fell in love with Chastel Kallman, ever been anybody, except a brilliant and dispossessed talent? The later Auden does not recognize the earlier, just as the writer of the early poems seems wholly different from the anxious and wretched being of his *Journal* and *Diaries*. Keats is Keats in letters as in poems, but Auden is not Auden. No wonder his early work and his manifesto to friends are so obsessed with "wholeness"; and it is highly ironic that Madge, and other readers ("My states of mind were broken. It was untrue / The easy doctrine, which separated things") should have been so struck by the force of the new doctrine. Mendelson comments: "Madge had it backward. Auden implied connections and relations only to announce their absence or failure." It is rather, perhaps, that Auden's early poetry is always having the opposite effect to the one proclaimed, delighting when it threatens, reassuring when it warns; relaxing when it sets out to trace, No wonder Lewis, the apostle of true wholeness, was so disillusioned.

With great acuteness, Mendelson traces the wholeness of the problem to an early essay called "Writing" which Auden did for Naomi Mitchison, who was editing a collection called *An Outline for Boys and Girls and Their Parents*. Written in a simple family style, it discusses the connection of words with isolation and self-consciousness. In trying to bridge a gulf and restore wholeness, language in fact convives at the disjunction it tries to overcome. A hunting group learns to talk when it tries to recreate the communal excitement of the hunt (was Auden recalling Tolstoy's theory of art, here?) but words are naturally antagonistic both to user and referent. In reconstituting experience they separate us from it and from the wholeness we seek to attain. Mendelson suggests that Auden's account of language's origin in a sense of bridge, a gap, comes close to structuralist theory "a generation before Ferdinand and Lacan", although the poet's schoolroom style in the essay, the furthest possible remove from the quality of later theoretical giants. Be that as it may, the piece certainly sheds light on the way Auden's diction gets its characteristic effects, and the gap his poems make between subject and response, a gap that becomes actually an aesthetic weapon. Mendelson's note for what is relevant to unlikely places - critics, he says, have written off this essay because of the book it came out in - is typical of the sensitive and delectable scholarship he brings to this period of Auden's life.

One might add that the even more effective weapon with which the poet's early audience and critics

the alienation of language is what might be termed the Saving Personalification. Direct appeals fail: it seems merely out of place when at the end of that ambitious poem "The Malvern" Auden invokes the words of Wilfred Owen and Katherine Mansfield ("Kathy in her Journal") to rub the message home; as out of place as when in 1929 ("It was Easter as I walked in the public gardens") he introduces us to an actual drop-out on a bench. It is true that "The Malvern" is a superlatively absorbing poem, and also the first poem in which Auden's settled maturity is forecast, with its caressing verbal catalogues and its simplistic ingenuities of appeal. It humanizes the helmeted airman and introduces us for the first time to that totally unmitigated intimacy which from now on will be the tone of a poet "assuming to sound like this," as he does in the Byron pastiche in *Letters from Iceland*.

The reader's feeling of intimacy with most poets takes two forms. First, that the poet is revealing to him, quite naturally and by the act of composition, something he could not reveal to anyone else; second, and conversely, that the poet is touching our hearts by revealing his own, as Hardy puts it, also reveals that he has a self to keep back. The second does not apply to later confessional poetry, like Lowell's and Berryman's, whose convention is a complete avowal to the reader; and neither applies to Auden. His early intimacy of threats and promises is like the disclosures of an older and dazzling schoolboy prodigy to the reader as younger child; and this changes to the reader being accepted as one of a group of comrades and initiates, the poet forthcoming and unbuttoned but retaining his powers of fascination and omniscience. The poems written in Brussels in 1938-39, "Musée des Beaux Arts", "Care du Miel", "The Capital" and "Epiphany on a Tyrant" - are good examples of this, and the success of such a style of communication reveals the holiness, embarrassment even, when the group seems to have disappeared, and the poet of "Lay your sleeping head" and "I sit in one of the dyes / On Fifty-Second Street" is talking to us on our own. The residue of discomfort and unreality in such poems is produced by a suggestion of centred aloneness, a person-to-person relation does not come naturally.

It is bare that the Saving Personalification comes to the rescue. These feasts have an air of the unintentional, of inadvertence, of something the poet does not bother about and the reader can carry away with him.

And, gentle, do not care to know, Where Poland draws her eastern bow, What violence is done, Nor what doubtful sin allows Our freedom in this English house Our peace is the sun.

The simple reference to Poland holds considerable complexity. Poland under Pilsudski is a tyrant appropriately named. But the bow is also that of violin and musician, the vulnerable instrument of peace, while the pictorial referent in the personification is Rembrandt's Polish Rider, the taut and seldierly masculine figure with the features of a girl, more generically, Poland plays the part in history of both victim and rebel. The beauty of the image seems serenely independent of the pushy insensibility of the poet as leader and lecturer. It is the same with the green heraldic blimp of English landscape that Auden lifted from Anthony Collier's *The Changing Face of England*.

Colm at this moment the Dutch sea so shallow

That sunk St Paul's would ever show its

And still the deep water that divides us

Still from Norway.

Perhaps the plunge into what seems a limp imagination is the effect of

trise secrecy, not elsewhere found in

Auden, the poet concealing his simple

pleat debt in Eliot's remembered dictum

that "the bad poet imitates, the good

poet steals." I think that John

Fuller, the doyen in England of Auden

minutes, has also pointed out Auden's

extraordinary debt to Collier's

handbook, whose barely altered

phrases none the less suffer a sea-

change, calming and stabilizing the

compositional alembic. All the per-

sonifications do that.

As Pilsudski in an odd corner of great

Celcius' kingdom
Might mumble of the summer measured
once by him.

- this might be borrowed too, but the effect of all Auden's borrowing - whether of phrases, ideas, or doctrines - is to emphasize the immense spread and richness of his achievement, and the retreat, too, by personification into a kind of shyness.

To find those clearings where the shy humilities
Gambol on sunny afternoons, the water
hole to which
The scarred rogue sorrow comes quietly
in the small hours.

The most pellucid and complete of all such things in Auden's poetry is probably the madrigal "O lurcher-loving collier", set to music by Benjamin Britten, which Auden wrote to ornament the last moments of *Coal Face*, a short documentary film about mining.

Everything that the young Auden wrote has a bottom of good sense. His poetry's hospitality towards crazes of every kind, crackpot or otherwise, carries into its art one of the most universal of human tendencies, and corrects it with a faith and a scepticism that, again as with most human beings, are almost identical. "You cannot have poetry unless you have a certain amount of faith in something, but faith is never unalloyed with doubts." A true magic is its own antidote. For Auden as for Nabokov, "art is a game of intricate enchantment and deception", but Auden also wrote that "in so far as poetry, or any of the arts, can be said to have an ulterior purpose, it is, by telling the truth, to disenchant and disintoxicate." It was by his genius for resolving this paradox that Auden became, as Mendelson justly claims, "the most inclusive poet of the twentieth century, its most technically skilled, and its most truthful".

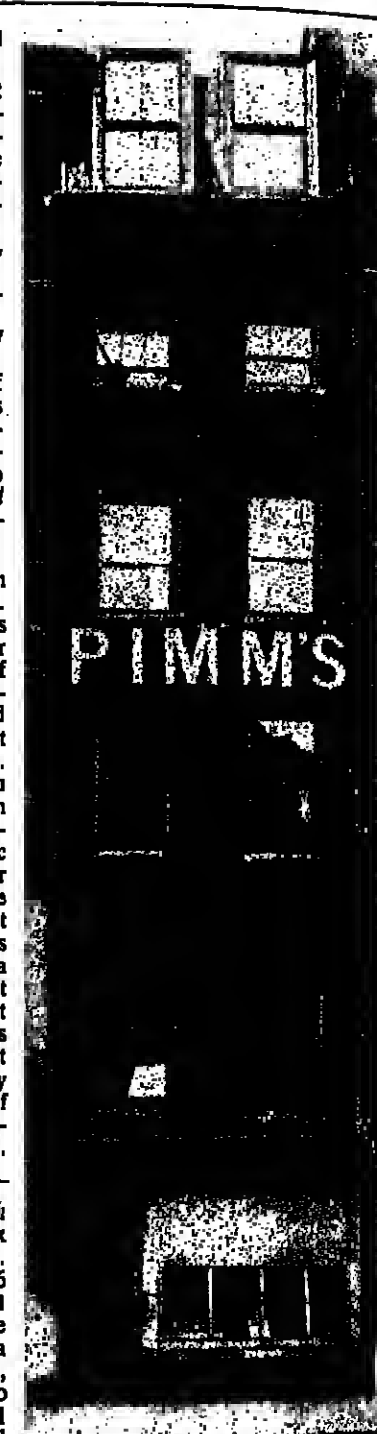
Howard Griffin's *Conversations with Auden* (200p, Grey Fox Press, Box 31411, San Francisco, CA 94131, \$12.95; paperback, \$5.95, 0 912516 55 0) are the edited versions of eight dialogues that took place in the late 1940s after Griffin, then thirty-one and beginning his career as a poet, offered his services as a secretary to the thirty-nine year old Auden. All eight pieces were originally published in magazines between 1949 and 1953, but appear here for the first time in book form. The subjects - society, morality and art, psychoanalysis, history and religious belief - and the tone of the conversations may be familiar to readers of Auden's prose; the dominant preoccupation is with Shakespeare, and there are rich, lively and penetrating discussions of, particularly, *Anthony and Cleopatra*. There are, of course, many flashes of a lighter apologetic brilliance. Griffin: "What would you give as an example of a good society?" Auden: "A man in a session. There the number of instruments and the improvisation element are important."

Out of the cage

By Lachlan Mackinnon

DONALD WALBOUT
Send My Roots Rain
A Study of Religious Experience in the Poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins
203pp. Ohio University Press. £9.60. 0 6214 0565 9

This unusual book, written by a philosopher, sets out to describe and analyse a common form of religious experience, exemplified by that of Hopkins. The experience is that of the committed believer who feels frustrated or trapped in his spiritual or worldly life, suffering what the author calls "engagement" who responds by the discipline of "naturalization", an attention to the "good things, human and natural, of the given world; but who is finally restored to well-being by the operation of grace." Hopkins offers a "phenomenology" (written with no particular philosophical intent) of this process. It is considered that Hopkins is a leader on the first two phases than on the third, but we are assured that



Victorian lettering on the facade forms a piquant contrast to the half-boarded windows of the Blitz era in this 1946 photograph of Pimm's Restaurant in the Poultry, London. Opened as a City chop-house in 1870, Pimm's (which gave its name to its drink served on its premises) was an unpretentious ripple in the great wave of restaurant and hotel building that struck London during the later nineteenth century. The illustration is from *Practical Bouffice's Hotels and Restaurants 1830 to the present day* (Royal Commission on Historical Monuments, England/HMSO. About 80 unnumbered pages. Paperback, £4.95. 0 11 700593 8).

their logic implies it: (We are reminded that "references to God are widespread in Hopkins.") A Protestant with communal impulses, Donald Walhout keeps drifting away from Hopkins's Jesuit individuality, but in dealing with the generalized experience he is admirably sympathetic and humane.

Unfortunately, Walhout's prose is tellingly flawed. "I have claimed that the poetry of Hopkins exhibits a certain phenomenological structure, a certain phenomenology of religious experience. That this phenomenology is so is a feature of the poetry itself and is independent of whether Hopkins himself experienced it or whether the audience experiences it," he concludes in his last, especially one who speaks of "phenomenology," should know, whether anything is so "irrespective of being experienced." It is clearly Walhout's own experience which he finds through Hopkins and he finds throughout the Hopkins of grace. Hopkins offers a "phenomenology" (written with no particular philosophical intent) of this process. It is considered that Hopkins is a leader on the first two phases than on the third, but we are assured that

ERNEST GELLNER:
Muslim Society
267pp. Cambridge University Press. £18.50. 0 521 22160 9

"Orientalists are at home with texts. Anthropologists are at home in villages," writes Ernest Gellner; although, if the anthropologist is to be fully at home, we should add tribes to villages. What are we to make, however, of a society, or rather that group of societies which, for convenience sake, we call Muslim - in which the Text *per excellence*, the Koran, or else oral reminders to it, or at the very least references to it, is to be found at the very heart of both villages and tribes? Here I fear that the approach "from above", that of Professor Gellner's Orientalist, and the approach from "below", of the anthropologist, are both equally out of place. The first strives, like the majority of Islamic scholars themselves, to cover reality with an ideal grid which obscures its shifting complexities. The second plunges into the undergrowth of actual diversity and risks losing sight of the very thing in which these societies find their own explanation, or rather the demanding model of their ideal final state, that is to say Islam. Indeed, their life is ordered - or disordered - in a perpetual debate between their principle and their reality, and any study of them which neglects one of these two terms will lack either realism or intelligibility - by which I mean an intelligibility conceived in the same mode as the subject itself.

It is true that the researcher can easily leave out the people whom he is studying. Such, indeed, is the price of most academic success. It is no less true that Muslim life does not consist, as the ulama would like it to, of a simple, mere or less rigorous, mera or less corrupt, application of the Koran. Such an application is merely an academic postulate, and the way in which actual societies depart from it describes supremely well the object of all anthropology. But to speak of departures is to speak also of movement, of paths followed or abandoned, of a model that can be referred to and of the realities which exceed or contradict it; it is to enter into the social and cultural history of Islam.

This was not Gellner's objective, however. One soon sees on which side he stands. In terms of the two kinds of specialists described at the outset, in a book full of appeals to Max Weber and Durkheim, and owing allegiance to Hume, to mention Freud, d'Holbach and Marx, one is somewhat surprised not to find any discussion, despite the first word of the title, of the arguments of Louis Massignon, H. A. R. Gibb, A. J. Arberry, R. A. Nicholson, G. von Grunbaum and others of our generation or recent predecessors. The Koran appears neither in the index of book-titles nor of subjects dealt with. The reasons for this pretention will become apparent when I assess its consequences.

Morocco occupies a large place in Gellner's book. He has done interesting field-work in that country, all the more fruitful in that Moroccan society counts among the few, at least adulterated in the Muslim world. Yet better societies are more revealing of the fundamental structures of an Islamic system as such. The defining characteristics of this latter should perhaps be looked for rather among the classic Bedouin (in fact, a very extensive type), in the first, well established, of a revolution, or the old agricultural lands of the Near East, the Mesopotamian *sawad*, or the Egyptian *riy*. But Gellner does not look very closely at his sample, however, one will be struck by the force of his analyses of the tribes of the Middle East. The least we can say is that in this event Gellner has revitalized a mass of information to which nothing much of the past has been added since Emile Laoust's major work of 1920, *Mois et les*

berberes. For in this domain, as in others, we have to recognize the relative inertia that overcame the French "reconnaissance" of Morocco after a period of significant discoveries.

Among these tribes Gellner finds what he claims is an especially convincing application of "segmentarity". We have to imagine a tree-structure, culminating in small kin-groups, all of them alike, which answer almost perfectly to the notion of what Durkheim called "solidarité mécanique". This latter is based on resemblance, by contrast with the "solidarité organique" which results from the industrial division of labour. The fairly approving yet also qualified critique which Gellner here makes of Durkheim is a model of its kind. It is understandable that, contagiously persuasive as it is, Gellner should have found support for his own interpretation in another major work from the colonial period, that of Robert Montagne, which was concerned with a region of the High Atlas further to the west.

Scientific hypotheses are worth what they are worth. I myself worked in a part of Morocco further still to the west, and then extended my investigation to other Maghreb and Oriental societies; and I do not agree with Gellner's hypothesis. I have spent out my reservations about it in *L'Intérieur du Maghreb* (1978), as well as in the new edition of my thesis on the Seksawa, which Gellner neglects one of these two terms will lack either realism or intelligibility - by which I mean an intelligibility conceived in the same mode as the subject itself.

These rural societies as a whole form only one of two typologies which Gellner finds in Islam, though they are the more widespread. The second type is dominant in the towns, asserting itself in a backward culture, in the context of a mercantile economy. Between these two types of society there occur tensions; interferences and alternations, as Ibn Khaldun saw (darely becoming, along with Hume, Montagne and Sir Edward Evans-Pritchard, the patron of a model that lacks neither virtuosity nor breadth). Gellner pursues the application of this model right up to the present moment: in the various "revivals", reform movements, *islah* in secularism, Khomel's *islah* in Islamism - for it is one of the merits of these grand hypotheses that they explain the most distant, as well as indeed as the most contradictory phenomena.

But it would be a pity to tie down a concept which is so clearly at home with the mobile. To the essential scenes of the village, the tribe and the *medina*, it now adds those of the workers' suburbs and of modern towns, just as industrialization and planning are now superimposed almost everywhere on the "traditional sector". To be fair, Gellner's scheme of "segmentarity" is played down to some extent when he considers the upsurge of nationalism, to which I would add for my own part the demands for social justice, cosmopolitan acculturation, and the more or less thorough infiltration to the politics of the superpowers. Islam is either evolving quietly, trying by revolutionary fits and starts to offer its own solutions in the face of invasion by foreign models. Before it became converted by radicalism, it had staid merely at being traditional, and it is this latter configuration which interests Gellner. It enables him to construct a second explanatory model which comes in time to supersede itself in the first. We must not criticize him for being beholden by a revolution, for after all Sheikh Abdoh and Sheikh Ben Badji go on - and have yet perhaps to speak their final word - in conjunction with the upsurge of the bourgeoisie.

The typology of the towns, illustrated notably by the ulama, tends to impose itself on that of the villages, illustrated by the saints, and to do so in the course of revivals, such as that which Iranian Islam is now passing

through. I shall leave aside the simplifications unavoidable in such a schema, or in any schematization. The objection that might be raised against Gellner is one of fact. First, that the scriptural culture also operates, though at different levels, in rural areas (learned *zawias*, and a teaching of the Koran which is very uneven but everywhere present). And second, that the most powerful and so far most lasting example of revival, the *wahhabite* movement, emerged from one of the most tribal of Arab settings, in the Nejd. This iconoclastic movement arose not in Mecca, with its merchant class, but among the Anaza Bedouin, grouped around the Saudi chiefs, and would perhaps have provided Gellner with just as clear-cut an example of "segmentarity" as the Berbers of the High Atlas.

The studies brought together in this book nevertheless contain many shrewd observations. Hagiology with its cycles, its sainthood and its "maraboutism" (if we must keep that dangerous word), with their economic and legendary details, does compensate for, and up to a point complete the rural order in its apparent compartmentalization. The same might be said of many other networks, economic ones notably, which Gellner does not deny but whose existence he seems to play down. They turn the contours of all local life into the product of multiple "interference" between concrete and formal factors.

I have used the term "interference" as a metaphor drawn from acoustics. Another metaphor, drawn by his brilliant caricature of the Hindu way of life in *Nalpaul*, dogmatic *Civilization*. To Nalpaul, dogmatic assertions to the effect that there is one single, right solution to life's problems are automatically suspect, and his aversion to such claims is enhanced by his sardonic perception of the gulf between assertion and performance. Because he holds such views it was always safe to assume that he would not like the Muslim revival and, sure enough, as this lengthy account of his search for the essence of the Islamic resurgence reveals, he did not.

Among the *Believers* is a record of travels in Iran, Pakistan, Malaysia and Indonesia during the latter part of 1979. Nalpaul appears to have started with the notion of interviewing great and famous Muslim leaders but he had very little success with this approach and soon settled for his more familiar style of exploiting casual contacts with a small number of middling people encountered along the way. Inevitably, his interlocutors were English-speaking and, to some extent, this circumstance cut him off from one of the principal elements in the Islamic revival. Although the educated have played a large part in formulating Islamic programmes and universities have been centres of revivalist propaganda, such efforts would have been of little avail without the support of the half-educated, those now urban immigrants whose linguistic limitations contributed to their hostility to the Westernized elites and to their emphasis upon Islam. Nalpaul's situation on his travels is well represented by his own ironic picture of himself, being led by the hand through the traffic of Tehran by an English-speaking Iranian communalist.

Despite these disadvantages, Nalpaul has produced a quite remarkably perceptive account of certain features of modern Islam. In particular he emphasizes the common ingredient of resentful hostility towards older elites which distinguishes many new arrivals in the cities of Islam and shows how the same impulse may lead either towards a radical, secular programme, such as communism, or towards a radical religious programme, such as Islamic revivalism. The Iranian revolution, he contends, was made by men without political doctrines, only with resentments; Islam, he writes, sanctifies rage. He notes also how the Islamic revival operates not only against the West and the Western

which the Koran makes allusion in several of its verses. But on the contrary, it is concerned with socio-historical analysis, though I would be the last to complain about that. It

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Agitating for justice

By Patricia Craig

PEADAR O'DONNELL:
The Knife
289pp. Dublin: Irish Humanities Centre. Distributed by Colin Smythe, Gerrards Cross. £9.75. (paperback, £3.25). 0 906462 02 9

In his novel *Adriano*, published in 1929, Peadar O'Donnell described the hiring fair at the Lagan, near Strabane in Co. Donagall, where "the Gaelic servants and the planter masters meet and bargain year after year, since the native power was broken in Ulster". A Scottish Presbyterian colony was established there in the seventeenth century, providing the nucleus of a thriving Unionist enclave; three hundred years later the dispossession of the old Irish still rages among the natives: "Domn on them," Donal A' Challeach said to an old crony, "Damn on them; an' it's us should be up here in these lands; bloody lot o' thieves..." In *The Knife*, which appeared in the following year, a minor act of reposition takes place when a Gaelic family, the Godfrey Dhus, becomes sufficiently prosperous to take over a Lagan farm, Montgomerys, which for years had been a solid piece of Protestant property. As in all of O'Donnell's novels, the small event produces extraordinary agitation in the neighbourhood, with everyone

agitated for the latest word on the subject.

It is O'Donnell's habit to keep the feelings of each one intense. Political and social passions run high in the striking little communities he depicts. On the *Edge of the Stream* (1934) satisfactorily opposes Catholic superstition with a kind of elementary socialism brought in by a returned emigrant. *Adriano* - a very disturbing story, based on a true incident - recounts the miseries of a Gaelic family whose experience of the catastrophic 1916-18 is death by starvation. In *The Big Windows* (1955 - probably O'Donnell's most successful work) the central image stands for enlightenment and clarity of vision, qualities imported into a backward mountain village by a young island woman who comes to the district as a bride. The pattern of events in each novel is arranged to illustrate a fundamental principle, generally relating to the author's clear view of economic life and other flaws in the structure of Irish society.

The Knife deals with class and clan loyalties, shifts in allegiance, mixed motives, betrayals and unexpected alliances between people of opposing political sympathies. "The Knife" is the nickname of Brian Godfrey Dhu (O'Donnell's dark Godfrey - in the father of the family by whose name the children are known, in the standard Gaelic way), an audacious young freedom fighter and respected opponent of the Lagan Orangemen. The Dark O'Donnells are matched by

the Black Rowans on the planter side - "It was said of the Rowans that a native never slept under their roof nor broke bread at their table." Two formidable families. "There's only one man would be likely to face The Knife, that's Sam Rowan", declares The Knife's voracious sister, Nuala Godfrey Dhu.

After the annihilating forces evoked in *Adriano*, *The Knife* is more optimistic about the possibilities for social change. Among "the servant men of the Lagan" the Godfrey Dhus are not alone in attaining a measure of prosperity; the mountain Burns are moving to the forefront of the community too. But the Burns are rising in a craftier, more conventional way, joining the priest-hood and the professions, and exerting influence thereby. Father John Burns is one brother, James Burns is another; in the aftermath of the 1916 Rising, and during the Black and Tan war, James is an associate of The Knife's - but after the signing of the Treaty of 1921 he joins the Free State army while The Knife remains on the Republican side. (The Treaty leaves the Lagan Orangemen high and dry; cut off from their compatriots in the Six Counties and incorporated into a despised Irish state.)

James's defection is a consequence of his rejection by Nuala; The Knife's sister finds Burns's advances not at all to her liking: "... the first time you kissed me, it made me ill." This is putting it plainly, with a vengeance. O'Donnell, in common

with most other Irish writers of his generation, is made uneasy by sexual passion and resorts to the idiom of the romantic novel in dealing with it: "... then, a tremble, she was in his arms". His novels are not in any sense psychological dramas; he never lets us know what the treacherous or twisted characters feel about their delinquencies. He excels, rather, in setting out the definitive action, as in the scene in *The Knife* in which a rabid Orangeman, under the influence of uncontrollable Protestant outrage, fires a shot-gun through a window of Montgomerys, hitting The Knife's elder brother Hugh Godfrey Dhu.

Peadar O'Donnell (born in 1893) was engaged in various forms of socialist agitation for most of his life; naturally his political concerns are reflected in his fiction, which carries implicit condemnation of all methods of action not properly grounded in firm socialist principles. One of his literary aims is to separate genuine integrity from moral posturing: of the latter, "the poor see a shelter in the rich man's piety when they are to the rich man's power: God help them," he states in *The Edge of the Stream*. The greatest evils, as he sees it, are the exploitation of the unwary, the greed of shopkeepers, the blighting association of bourgeoisie, professional people, Protestant or Catholic, with fixed ideas and interests. "Schoolmasters, policemen, priests, doctors, attorneys, cattle-dealers, they are all alike; they're all friends of the shopkeepers." This is the Ireland of his

reprehensible new rich; Donagh MacDonagh encapsulated it too, in an unedifying trilogy: "The Jobbers and the gombasen men add the cheats."

There are exceptions, of course. Doctor Henry, in *The Knife*, is a Lagan Protestant whose cheerful intelligence makes him "a poor sort of Orangeman". Like Sam Rowan, who also sets the claims of neighbourliness above planter solidarity, Doctor Henry provides shelter for the fugitive Knife during the civil war which followed the Treaty - and receives a death sentence from the new Free State government for his pains. He and The Knife, condemned to die (as they believe) at least partly through the spitefulness of James Burns, brace themselves to die well: what's in store for them, though, is not extinction but the outlaw's exhibition: "with a whoop they went racing across the heather towards the mountains". It's a symbolic exit.

Few novelists have dealt so thoroughly and effectively with the stresses and complications of rural Irish society, or presented their ideological conflicts with such engaging narrative vigour. O'Donnell is on the side of reform, not enthusiasm; everything matters, in his novel, and nothing matters so much as social justice. What's important to the author is the fair, disinterested view. His characters are assessed sharply but not probed deeply, which limits his achievement, perhaps, but makes his purpose no less creditable and his observations no less instructive.

The woe that is in marriage

By David Nokes

JAMES STEPHENS:
Desire and Other Stories
Selected and introduced by Augustus Martin
223pp. Dublin: Poolbeg Press. £2.50. 0 905169 41 7

The centenary of James Joyce's birth next February 2 is also that of James Stephens, who was born in the same city on the same day. This remarkable coincidence of birthdays, Christmas names and literary interests was cherished by both men. Towards the end of his life Joyce even asked Stephens to finish *Finnegans Wake* - that philological monument to coincidence and reincarnation - for him, if he should die before completing it. Yet the differences between them were as striking as the parallels. In radio broadcasts, Stephens described Joyce's initial reaction to his work:

"He turned his chin and his eyes at me, and my down at me, that he had read my two books; that, grammatically, I did not know the difference between a semi-colon and a colon; that my knowledge of Irish life was non-Catholic and so, non-existent; and that I should give up writing and take to a good job like shoe-shining."

Stephens replied to this lofty snub by asserting that he had never read any of Joyce's work, "and that, if Heaven preserved to me, my protective wit, I never would read a word of his, unless I was asked to destructively review it."

Both Joyce and Stephens contributed significantly to the development of the modern Irish short story, and his origins in George Moore's story, *The United Field* (1903). Like Joyce, Stephens began by publishing brief sketches of lower-middle-class life in Dublin newspapers. *Dubliners* Joyce declared, was written "in a style of scrupulous inexactness" (in a style of scrupulous inexactness). In the 1950s, Stephens wrote an essay entitled "The Theme of *Ulysses*" in which he predicted what might have happened between Stephen Dedalus and Molly Bloom on June 17, 1904 - the day after *Ulysses* has taken place. One of the subtlest Joyce critics, Robert M. Adams, played another kind of game with the apparent reality of Joyce's fictions when, in *Surface and Symbol*, he investigated whether the twenty-five hours of Molly Bloom's

literary sophistication nor intellectual rigour, but an evocation of that threshold where splendid make-believe and real reality take an uncomfortable compromise. Stephens's characters are shabby unglamorous dreamers, precise in habit, poor in spirit, unified in purpose and unfilled in desire.

A number of these "stories" are arranged in triads of sketches, such as "Three Heavy Husbands", "Three Women who Wept", triads of figures caught in the fixed attitudes of a type. As the titles indicate, the most frequent subject is the woe that is in marriage. His characters wed in obedience to mere convention. Their expectations of the married state are small, but what they receive even less. In "Darling" we read:

He had married his wife very largely because there was no one else who could so easily be married; and she, after attending quite a respectable time, had married him because no one better had turned up.

Similar sentiments can be found in several of the stories, leading to predictably unhappy conclusions. Stephens's preferred style is proverbial and aphoristic, with a predilection for rhythmic repetitions that lend themselves to reading aloud, and betray the influence of an older Celtic tradition. Yet those whose knowledge of Stephens is confined to his fable *The Crock of Gold* may find the harsh realism of his story "Hunger" something of a shock. Published pseudonymously in 1918 it is a stark and harrowing portrait of a

working class family starving to death. "The story is a true one," Stephens later wrote, "and would have killed me but that I got it out of my system this way." The repetitions here enforce a relentless sense of numbing despair.

They could scarcely die of hunger for they were native to it. They were hunger. There was no other hunger but them; and they only made a noise about food when they saw food.

The title story "Desire" is a modernized fairy tale. A man saves a stranger from being run over and killed in traffic. The two men talk, and the stranger asks him what is his greatest desire. The man returns home to his wife and they discuss the question. Eventually he decides that

his fondest wish is to stay forever just as he is at that time. They retire to bed, and the wife has a remarkable dream in which she is freezing in polar regions, struggling through icy wastes. What she finds on waking probably does not need to be revealed.

This volume offers a somewhat uneven selection of stories, yet in that it adequately reflects the varying quality of Stephens's work. His career was very much bound up with the development of the Irish literary movement, and he was a member of both Sinn Féin and the Gaelic League. His work, ranging from Celtic fables and fairy stories to pieces of working class realism, indicates the rival claims of revolution and romanticism on the imagination of that movement.

BIOGRAPHY

The Esperanto of the races

By Eugen Weber

JOHN J. MACALON:
This Great Symbol
Pierre de Coubertin and the Origins of the Modern Olympic Games
359pp. University of Chicago Press. £15. 0 225 50000 4

As newspapers settle more firmly into creative incoherence, some of the liveliest writing takes refuge in the sports pages. A similar trend may be taking shape with books about sports, only a trickle as yet, but refreshingly readable. On the heels of Richard Holt's recent *Sport and Society in Modern France*, comes John J. MacAlon's study of Pierre de Coubertin, written - and well written - by a psychological anthropologist with a bent for history. It is the first book to place Coubertin and the Olympic Games he recreated in a historical context; the first also to provide a serious biography of this complex man.

Unfortunately, not a complete one. MacAlon carries Coubertin from his birth on New Year's Day, 1858, to the mitigated triumph of the first modern Olympics in Athens, 1896. This is less than half the life-span of the seventy-four-year-old gentleman, white-whiskered and frock-coated, who died in 1937, in a Geneva park; and it covers only one of the ten Olympic occasions of his life, thus depriving us of a great many episodes of an uneven progress. One gathers that a second volume will carry the tale to a close, but the break in 1896 must reflect the author's convenience rather than internal logic. His treatment makes one want to read on, and the decision to close with the century has the impact of the duck story: "You think it's the end of the song? Well, it is. Not for long, one hopes."

Still, what was done is well done. MacAlon presents his hero as affirming aristocratic values while rebelling against their limitations. Descendant of an old noble line of merchants, magistrates, and military men; son of a fashionable society painter; stubborn, charming, slight, shrill-voiced, and given to gesticulation; Coubertin was a strange man, condemned to marginality both by his social class and by his views within his class. Republican in a legitimate family, friend of Protestants (and married to one) despite a strongly Catholic background, Coubertin asserted democratic views in elitist terms, patriotic passions in an internationalist enterprise that lent itself to the wildest nationalism, and a high sense of honour in the restoration of an anti-utilitarian competition soon to lapse into exploitation of every sort.

A clash of family and cultural values saddled the young Coubertin with "serious psychodynamic conflict folded into... psychosocial dramas" (happily, an untypical quotation!) It may be also that he was short to stature and the youngest of three sons. To the lay eye, he resolved his conflicts quite well: the classical education the Jesuits gave him provided appropriate quotations for his numerous articles and speeches, and a crucial inspiration, it taught him to idealize ancient life as a model for those who ignore its details, the higher morality of honour and growth, the code of noblesse oblige. He also had the income for his values: a capital of 500,000 gold francs, all of which he was to spend in the pursuit of distinction through service.

His parents had destined him for the priesthood, but settled for St-Cyr. Though he liked fencing and riding, military life in peacetime did not hold out the promise of distinguished action, and St-Cyr was abandoned after a few months. Coubertin decided, or so he later claimed, to attach his name to a great pedagogical reform. He had read Taine about English success in building character, and Taine's *Schoolboys* which showed how this was done. At seven, his first trip to England revealed a model of nobility, a heroic pedagogy turning out a modern aristocracy, Christian, manly and enlightened.

His vocation confirmed by this vision, inspired by the English public schools and in particular by Dr Amold's (and Tom Brown's) Rugby, he returned to France determined to use *la pédagogie sportive* to revivify his own social class, then all society. Lyrelets were to become schools of patriotism and moral training. Athletic games would teach French schoolboys manliness and self-reliance, "harden" as he put it in a public lecture of 1887, "a flabby, listless, confined youth; its body and its character."

Gymnastics were too limiting and rigid for this purpose; military exercises were not free enough, physical - and character - development called for "joy and liberty." Like Jules Simon, the grand old statesman whom he enlisted in his campaign for English-style sports, Coubertin demanded the right to play for regimented, etiolated children, above all the freedom, the enthusiasm and the passionate excess to which competitive games could lead.

France, of course, had no tradition of schoolboy sports, and Coubertin's appreciation of their "impassioned activity" and gratuitousness ("Sport is a physical discipline sustained by enthusiastic addition to unnecessary effort") went far beyond the moderate recipe of *mens sana in corpore sano*. Enthusiasm, liberty and schoolboy association went against the French grain, as did the English inspiration of it all. Since sticky wickets never caught on in France, we say that Coubertin had a hard row to hoe.

All his life, Coubertin drew fresh vitality from foreign contacts. After England, America. In 1887, with

Jules Ferry lending a helping hand, the young baron set off to report on schools and universities in the United States and Canada - an official commission the more readily delivered since the *chargé de mission* paid his own expenses. He met Theodore Roosevelt, Professor William M. Sloane of Princeton (his Olympic representative-to-be), saw at first hand the mass popularity of spectator sports, and returned to Paris in good time to be fascinated by the World's Fair of 1889, from which he learnt that public spectacle and individual feats of prowess could profitably be combined. The context that would best advance Coubertin's purpose lay ready to hand.

One of this book's many virtues is that it shows that the Olympic idea was scarcely strange to the *fin-de-siècle*. German archaeologists were digging at Olympia, Scandinavian "Olympic Games" had been held in the 1830s; English ones, at Much Wenlock in Shropshire, which Coubertin attended, had been going on since the 1840s; some of his associates attended a seminar near Grenoble which had its own "Olympic" tradition; and one of his rivals, Paschal Grousset, had campaigned in favour of an Olympic festival for France. The Greeks promoted "Olympian games" in Athens in 1859, and several succeeding festivals in 1870, 1875 and 1889. In 1885, Ferdinand de Lesseps had called for a revival of the Olympic Games in Paris. But only Coubertin would bring it off.

By the 1890s his labours on behalf of sports were beginning to show results. Bicycling had become a popular sport without his help, but

football was prospering among the elect. Football and running enthusiasts from public and private schools founded Le Racing (1882), then the Stade Français (1883) and a host of provincial clubs, finally in 1890 the Union des Sociétés Françaises de Sports Athlétiques (USFSA), over which Coubertin presided. He successfully soothed suspicion of new-fangled sports, hostile headmasters, feuds between adherents of rugby and soccer, negotiated political rapids, and triumphed over wide-spread indifference until, in 1894, he launched his Olympic idea in an international Congress at the Sorbonne. He aimed, he later said, not to convince but to seduce; and he succeeded, by way of a long string of banquets, fêtes and other ceremonies for most of which he paid himself. In April 1896, on an Easter Monday when Western and European Easter coincided, the King of Greece opened the modern Olympic Games in Athens, revived after a fifteen-century break.

This last part of the book is especially good. Coubertin's cobbling together of an International Olympic Committee and its fragility; the national and international manoeuvres surrounding the occasion; Greek internal tensions, the Olympic policies of the Greek royal family looking for popular support and symbolic identification with ancient Hellas, the conservative opposition and the liberal support, the American athletes with their college yells, the French runner, Lermusiaux, who ran the 800 metres in white gloves because King George was present, the national pride and popular enthusiasm culminating in a Greek shepherd's winning the Marathon race,

the deliberate neglect of Coubertin by Greek organizers who wanted to keep the games in Athens for good and the failure of their plans after the disastrous 1897 war with Turkey over Crete - a conflict not unrelated to the national intoxication of the Oames - are masterfully treated, with the account spiced throughout by the acid comments of Charles Maurras. Nor is the point of view that of a scholar only, but that of an athlete who knows his subject by intuition as well as by research. MacAlon has been a runner, and can evoke his own emotions as well as hitherto unknown facts. But 1897, or thereabouts, is where he ends, with Coubertin, clear of the Scylla of Greek monopolizing of "his" Games, preparing for the Clarybills of the coming ones, which would be disastrously linked to World's Fairs - in Paris (1900) and St Louis (1904) - whose horrors the Olympics would outlast only with difficulty.

But outlast it they did, thanks largely to the stubborn commitment of one man so driven and inspired that he would not let go. Avid dreamer and sturdy pragmatist, MacAlon's hero was one of the formidable entrepreneurs of his time, blessed with the vision and drive peculiarly vouchsafed to some of the marginal, and the small fortune that allowed him to pursue his grand obsession. By the time Coubertin died, he had spent it all. But he had won an Olympic gold medal (anonymously, for poetry, in 1912), he had ensured not only the revival but the survival of one of the great spectacles of the twentieth century, and had established apart, in Giraudoux's phrase, as "the Esperanto of the races."

Moor at home

By Alan Ryan

DAVID MCLELLAN (Editor):
Karl Marx
Interviews and Recollections
186pp. Macmillan. £15. 0 333 28362 7

This jolly little volume raises - as all such volumes do - the old question of whether we are right to take more interest in the lives of great men than we take in the lives of anyone else. There are obviously instances where what makes them great men is so intimately related to their private lives that our understanding of their achievements is vastly enriched by biography - Ptolemy's biography of Proust surely settles the question. In that instance at least. But what about Marx? Aren't we admonished by Marxian theory to ignore the individual behind the doctrine? If the Marxist suspicion of "Great Men" theories of history is justified, shouldn't we treat Marxianism itself as the anonymous and impersonal product of the force of intellectual production of its epoch? Is it not, in other words, a case of the tempting bourgeois mystification, to concentrate on the individual who happens to embody those forces? Won't the bourgeoisie judge socialist morality by the illegitimate child Marx had by his family's maid-of-all-work Helene Demuth, or socialism's commitment to productive work by the fact that Marx never did any, or its true view of fraternity by Marx's calling Lassalle a "Jewish Nigger"?

David McLellan's collection of mostly familiar bits and pieces doesn't shed much light on *Capital*; as one would expect, what Marx's hearers thought he was saying depended a good deal on their own intellectual preoccupations. Thus Wilhelm Liebknecht remembers a pretty straightforward scientific materialist - one who saw an electric railway engine as the locomotive of the revolution. Marx told me with great enthusiasm about the model of an electric engine that had been on show for a few days in Regent Street and that could drive a railway train. "The problem is now solved," he said, "and the consequences are unpredictable. The

economic revolution must necessarily be followed by a political revolution, for the latter is but the expression of the former."

Kautsky, who first met Marx only shortly before his death, recalls Marx's acerbity on being asked when Volume 2 of *Capital* would appear - it was to Kautsky that Marx made the famous reply to the suggestion that it was time to publish his complete works that "they would first have to be completely written". But, none of these reminiscences gets far with the content of Marx's incomplete works.

What they do offer that possesses some intellectual interest - it goes without saying that "Moor at Home" is riveting in much the same way as *The Diary of an Edwardian Lady* - is a glimpse of Marx's understanding of European politics. Although Liebknecht makes it look as though Marx relegated the question of when, where and how the revolution would break out to a very secondary rank, the truth seems to be that Marx thought that socialism might be indefinitely delayed if premature uprisings played into the hands of the existing powers. Interviewed by a reporter from the *Chicago Tribune*, Marx praises the way the workers of Berlin declined to be provoked by Bismarck - a view which is all of a piece with his fear that the Paris Commune would set the cause of revolution back by twenty-five years by getting the most active workers and their leaders murdered in a one-sided fight.

The view which sustained Lenin and Trotsky forty years later is articulated in a discussion at the Devonshire Club in early 1879, reported on by Mount Stuart Grant Duff. He looks, not unreasonably, for a great and not distant crash in Russia, thinks it will begin by reform from above which the old had edifice will not be able to bear and which will lead to its tumbling down altogether. Next he thinks that the movement will spread to Germany taking there the form of a revolt against the existing military system.

In the same conversation, Marx looked forward to some of our contemporary miseries; Grant Duff asked him why the governments of Europe could not secure a general peace, a reduction in expenditure on armaments and an

increase in the social budget sufficient to fend off revolution.

"Ah," was his answer, "they can't do that. All sorts of fears and jealousies will make that impossible. The burden will grow worse and worse as science advances for the improvements in the art of destruction will keep pace with its advance and every year more and more will have to be devoted to costly engines of war. It is a vicious circle - there is no escape from it."

Obviously, there is not much in these pages beyond strikingly good sense and an excellent political imagination, but these are hardly to be derided.

All the same, the plums here are essentially domestic and trivial. In this volume of Royal Wedding fever, it's nice to learn from Eleanor Marx that her older sister Jenny familiarly addressed her father as "Challey" or Charley and that his nickname for her was "DJ". Marx's taste for vile cigars is referred to more than once, and Liebknecht tells the splendid story of how his search for the cheapest possible smoke led him to a brand at 1s 6d which "brought forth his political-economic talent for saving: with every box he smoked he

"saved" 1s 6d. Consequently, the more he smoked the more he "saved". If he managed to consume a box per day, then he could live at a pinch on his "savings" ... after the lapse of some months the family physician had to intervene ... or Marx would have saved himself to death. What with slingshots - good slingshots - from Hampstead Heath and the company of his daughters, life chez Marx could be extremely agreeable. Even in the first, painful and impoverished years of their exile in London, when they were harassed by duns, battered by the deaths of their children, and embittered by the treacherous and recriminations left over from the failures of 1848, the family was astonishingly resilient - the anonymous "Prussian Spy" who complains about the risk to your trousers from the children's cooking games confesses that the conversation is "spirited and agreeable", the company "interesting and original" and the welcome "most friendly". And that, after all, comes from a hostile witness. £15 is a lot to pay for this, though, and it's hard to see why anyone would prefer this rag-bag, engaging though it is, to Mrs Kapp's biography of Eleanor Marx in which most of this material is put to such good use.

Life before and after

By Richard Brown

PETER COSTELLO:
Leopold Bloom
A Biography
197pp. Inchicore: Gill and Macmillan. £7.95. 0 7171 1100 8

Really, when placed beside the greatest fictions, pales into insignificance, or so we may infer from the activities of Peter Costello, who recently produced a workmanlike short life of James Joyce but now offers up a rather more interesting production: a "biography" of Leopold Bloom.

It is one of the many excellences of Joyce's writing that his characters can take on a life of their own and sustain it for some 200 pages in this way. And in exploiting this excellence Costello follows a significant line of Joyce commentators, beginning with William Empson who in the 1950s wrote an essay entitled "The Theme of *Ulysses*" in which he predicted what might have happened between Stephen Dedalus and Molly Bloom on June 17, 1904 - the day after *Ulysses* has taken place. One of the subtlest Joyce critics, Robert M. Adams, played another kind of game with the apparent reality of Joyce's fictions when, in *Surface and Symbol*, he investigated whether the twenty-five hours of Molly Bloom's

lived in the "Ithaca" episode of *Ulysses*, could really have been intimate enough with her to deserve that title. More recently John Harty Raleigh's *The Chronicle of Leopold and Molly Bloom* drew out from the hoard of detailed memories worked into *Ulysses* a complete, year by year account of the Blooms' courtship and marriage.

Like Raleigh, Costello has meticulously reconstructed a complete life for Bloom out of the wealth of materials which Joyce provided in *Ulysses*, turning back into chronological order the scattered and often oblique references which appear in the book in the order they occur in the minds of the principal characters or through the agency of narrative form. Many of these incidents are well worth spelling out again and are strong enough to stand on their own merits, even in the sometimes rather lifeless rendering that Costello gives them. It is a pleasure to be led through the Blooms' courtship, the poignant early happy days of their marriage, Molly's singing career and her amorous inclinations, and Bloom's complex ancestry, his succession of jobs and his memorable walk-on part in Irish history, helping Parnell with his fallen hat on the occasion of the seizure of the *United Ireland* office in 1890. As in Joyce, these imagined details are given credibility and support in the form of historically verifiable facts.

For the first-time reader of *Ulysses* Costello's book will have a revelation of many unnoticed and unsuspected details of Bloom's richly conceived life. Not least, it is a useful source of annotation and explanation of some of its more puzzling moments. It may be instructive also for the more experienced Joycean reader, who will be reminded of the strong, affective core of domestic narrative, which can sometimes be passed over in those studies which pay excessive attention to the formal experimental aspects of Joyce's work. What is lost, though, in Costello's approach, is the sense of how these details function in the grander design of *Ulysses* - precisely the complexity of time sequence and narrative modulation, and virtuosity, and the resonance of characters, themes and situations that make *Ulysses* what it is.

Costello tries to make good this deficiency in two ways. His concession to experimentation is to preface each chapter with a list of contemporary advertising captions, whose purpose is, unfortunately, not really clear. One supposes that they are there to add atmosphere; or perhaps to represent the complete published works of Bloom himself. Secondly, and more enjoyably, Costello carries on his story until June 6, 1904, continuing it to the end of Bloom's life. In Costello's version, Molly dies of cancer within a few years and, adulterous as always, her last words are "Oh Polly, the sailors were so

nice." Bloom is left, tandler than ever, to oggle lustfully but harmlessly the Dublin woman and to be a life, and a useful source of annotation and explanation of some of its more puzzling moments. It may be instructive also for the more experienced Joycean reader, who will be reminded of the strong, affective core of domestic narrative, which can sometimes be passed over in those studies which pay excessive attention to the formal experimental aspects of Joyce's work. What is lost, though, in Costello's approach, is the sense of how these details function in the grander design of *Ulysses* - precisely the complexity of time sequence and narrative modulation, and virtuosity, and the resonance of characters, themes and situations that make *Ulysses* what it is.

Though the book is not fleshed out quite imaginatively enough to be a successful novel, nor annotated and cross-referenced like a scholarly work, it makes a likeable addition to the study of the politics of those unfortunate who know of *Ulysses*, and admire it in principle but are reluctant to tackle it in practice. Its pleasures, in the end, are those of a biography of an ordinary man - a biography no less interesting just because its subject did not really exist.

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Denominational distinctions

By Patrick Collinson

RICHARD L. GREAVES:

Society and Religion in Elizabethan England

925pp. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. £19.50.
0 8166 1030 4

"The complete work, very briefly comprehended in a noble book (if your horse be not too weak) of three hundred and twelve sheets of good demi paper," Martin Marprelate's joke at the expense of a certain Elizabethan tome of controversial divinity springs to mind as one weighs in the hand this work of almost a thousand pages and of a thickness associated with the Bible or the *Alternative Service Book*. The astonishing and almost justified claim of the author is to have explored the thought of the Elizabethan religious public, Anglican, Puritan, Catholic and Separatist, on "nearly every topic of social significance".

There are, to be sure, some gaps, including painting and other aspects of aesthetics. Two of Keith Thomas's favourite subjects, laughter and animals, are also missing, although a section on "cruel sports" scotches Macaulay's unjustified sneer about Puritans and bear-baiting. (Philip Stubbes in *The Anatomie of Abuses* asked: "What Christian heart can take pleasure to see one poor beast to rent, tear, and kill another, and all for his foolish pleasure?") A section on "Society and the Spoken Word" strangely fails to mention that Puritans (unlike some bishops) were hostile to swearing, a short section on music is silent on the important subject of psalm-singing, and the use by some Puritans of curious baptismal names ("of godly signification") is barely mentioned. Poverty and the fashionable topic of death are dealt with, but not disease and the subject of public health measures, which divided religious opinion in 1603 and sent one London preacher to prison for two years.

But the reader is more likely to be impressed by the seeming variety of the subjects which are represented than critical of such omissions. As in the proud boast of a certain Sunday newspaper, practically all human life is here, from food and drink to monumental brasses, from hospitality to usury, from prostitution to weights and measures. In form, the book is an immense, systematic *summa*, although the arrangement of topics is occasionally a trifle bizarre, as in the chapter "Social Conduct and Social Order", which contains items on clothing, speech, hooks and knives, suicide (a particularly interesting section) and war. The extent of Dr Greaves's sourcing is astounding. There are 1,560 footnotes, each containing as many as a dozen citations: a deep well of perhaps 12,000, perhaps 15,000 references into which other Elizabethan specialists will lower grateful buckets. The use made of the margins of bibles (and not only of the Geneva Bible) constitutes in itself a major research undertaking. In addition, about 500 other contemporary religious books have been read, together with a variety of other printed and manuscript sources and almost all the relevant scholarly literature. No wonder the work is dedicated to the author's young daughters, "with acknowledgement of the sacrifices and understanding which the writing of it costed".

Consequently, it gives no great pleasure to record a harsh verdict on this immensely informative compilation. The judgment that the entire edifice is founded upon the false categories which provide the content of argument. To change the image, we are impaled once again on the horns of the familiar but partly false dichotomy: Anglican vs. Puritan. And we can almost forget about the three other religious "groups" which Greaves has embraced in his survey: the use of Catholic sources is very limited; while the Separatists are mentioned in a few places, not least in the matter under review, so far as practical purposes, the

enquiry is based on the proposition that to make sense of religion-in-society in Elizabethan England it is sufficient to discover what the Puritans had to say on the one hand and then what the Anglicans were saying on the other. For some time now several historians of the period have been trying to explain (and it appears that we shall have to go on trying) that this procedure will not work, since there were no hard-and-fast Puritan and Anglican positions. Although "anti-Puritan", "conformist" and "formalist" are all legitimate terms which point to recognizable tendencies. As for "Puritan", it is an important word, not to be lightly discarded from historical discourse, but like all terms of stigmatization it is to be handled delicately, like a hand-grenade with the pin half pulled. It scarcely describes what J. F. H. New once called a "unity of principle".

Greaves's attitude to this crucial issue is strangely ambivalent. At an early stage he acknowledges that the most appropriate model for the location of Elizabethan religious parties may be a continuum, running from a far right of papists to a far left of fringe sects (but in the contemporary perception this was the right wing - *Error on the Right Hand* as a work by Henech Clapham puts it) and passing on the way through conservative Anglicans, moderate Anglicans, conservative Puritans, moderate Puritans, more extreme Puritans. Yet he appears to regard these as fixed points on a rigid scale, not as a system of dynamic relativities. And the continuum is soon discarded for the simple polarity of Anglican and Puritan. In Greaves's estimation, Puritans were real, identifiable and even measurable people, twenty-five out of 567 Yorkshire gentry families in 1570, 138 out of 679 in 1642, "an increase of 15.9%". He finds it possible to say, with startling confidence, where these people lived. "Geographically their strength was greater in regions devoted to pastoral farming, where the farmhouse was the focal point of life." (Really? Regions like Westmorland and Merioneth for instance?) "The important point", writes Greaves, "is that Puritans were essentially recognizable to Anglicans as Puritans." But who were the "Anglicans"? Were they "essentially recognizable" as such? Often the business of labeling was an elaborate and malicious game rather than a matter of field studies. "If I be a papist," an archbishop of York told his dean, "thou be a puritan."

If Greaves were able to demonstrate a real and consistent difference of outlook between Puritans and Anglicans on most of the topics with which he deals, then to construct a survey of moral and social diversity on these principles would have some relevance for the purpose of the enquiry. But this he is honestly unable to do. Again and again he discloses a community of thought on the matters at issue. The almost equally thorough study by C. L. and E. George, *The Protestant Mind of the English Reformation* (Princeton, 1961), might have led him to expect this. Greaves tells us that "Puritans and Anglicans agreed on the basic responsibilities of parents", were "harmonious" in their views on apparel, "substantially agreed in their position on suicide", "united in purpose" so far as various economic questions were concerned. Even in an area where one might have expected to find important differences, such as heretics, Greaves discovers a "blurring of positions", "a fair degree of overlapping". Some of these observations are ponderous and predictable. We scarcely need to be told that "both groups found bastardy, prostitution, sodomy, incest and rape unacceptable, socially as well as morally".

Other points of alleged agreement are more striking. It is interesting that Greaves has found almost no peculiarity in Puritan economic attitudes, no significant departure from a conservative, paternalistic attitude towards poverty, "no distinctive

Puritan work ethic in the sense in which this phrase is normally used." (But to fault "the Weber thesis", which is not necessarily his intention, it would be necessary to investigate the Calvinist doctrine of predestination which Weber believed was the mainspring of the "inner-worldly ascetic".)

Yet, in no way dismayed by these blind leads, Greaves forges on, and occasionally his willingness to search for Puritan-Anglican differences lands him in absurd situations. He hopes that analysis of two samples of supposedly Puritan and Anglican clerical families may reveal that Puritans were less ready than Anglicans to employ methods of contraception. For the Puritan parents reproduced at the rate of 5.8 children per household, the Anglicans at only 5.4. But there are no more than forty families in each sample, and the Puritan figure is depressed by placing in the Anglican group Andrew Willatt, a distinguished divine who, as Greaves admits, cannot be usefully defined either way, and who as it happens fathered no less than eighteen children. If I were J. H. Hexter, I should call that a statistical absurdity erected on a taxonomical fallacy.

At the end of the hard-fought day, we are left with a miscellaneous shopping-list of more or less social topics where "significant differences" in outlook between Anglicans and Puritans can be shown to have developed. They include (and I follow Greaves's order) several aspects of marriage and divorce, the punishment of sexual offenders, some details of family life, the place of chaplains in episcopal households, the responsibility of servants in rebuking errant masters, parts of the educational curriculum, academic dress, degrees in divinity, sabbatarianism, church laws, holy days, church music, "war theory", the role of diocesan usury, the oath *ex officio* *mauro* and ecclesiastical courts.

Greaves is not wrong about those matters. Elizabethan churchmen did hold differing views about many things. Some, such as the *ex officio* oath, were even divisive. Inclusion of theological, ecclesiastical and moral topics beyond the scope of this book would serve to underline still more sharply the divided condition of the English Church in this period. Such mutually hostile tendencies are to be expected in religious and social life. But some of the divisions occurred within the ranks of those whom Greaves would represent monolithically, as Puritans: sabbatarian differences (for a time) over the application of the fourth commandment, differences over the interpretation of the Apocalypse, "unbridgeable" and ultimately fatal differences over church polity, hot to speak of merely temperamental or tactical differences. But such difficulties were mitigated by the constant quest for the middle ground, the mean or *via media* which Greaves mentions only once, in connection with eating and drinking.

The body of Elizabethan Protestantism was not neatly divided into two well-defined and clearly labelled parties. That Greaves mostly assumes that it was, if only by the terminology he employs, even when it is inconsistent with his conclusions, will render a richly informative if somewhat ponderous book retrospective in the eyes of many historians, particularly on this side of the Atlantic. Insofar as Dr Greaves succeeds in convincing his readers, it will serve to delay a more balanced and realistic assessment of the Elizabethan religious scene.

The Royal Historical Society's *Annual Bibliography of British and Irish History*: Publication of 1980 has recently been published under the general editorship of G. R. Elton (205pp. Brighton: Harvester, £18.95; 0 7108 3361 3). Seven of the work's thirteen sections deal with general British history according to a chronological plan, with each section subdivided thematically. Wales, Scotland and Ireland receive separate treatment.



Edmund Compton: from a seventeenth-century engraving by J. Neef, based on an earlier portrait. A British Library exhibition marking the quatercentenary of Compton's death is currently on display in the British Museum, Great Russell Street, London WC1, where it will continue until February 1982.

Information, please

"Information, please" is a service which is available free of charge. Those wishing to use it are asked to follow as closely as possible the form in which items are presented here, and to mark envelopes "Information, please".

Lord Colin Campbell (1853-95), barrister and politician, and his wife, née Gertrude Elizabeth Blood (1858-1911): any relevant information sought for a study.

G. H. Fleming, Department of English, University of New Orleans, Lake Front, New Orleans, Louisiana 70122.

William Alexander Harvey (1875-1951), architect: any letters, drawings, plans, photographs or reminiscences; for a study.

Peter Atkins, 19 Somerdale Road, Northfield, Birmingham.

Alexander Henry the Younger: any information on date and location of his birth, and also his early life before 1799; whereabouts of any portraits also sought; for an annotated edition of his manuscript journal of his life in the North American West 1799-1814.

Barry M. Gough, Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada, N2L 3C5.

Robert Lee MacCamerson (1865-1912): for a study of this American painter of portraits and genre paintings, any information concerning the artist and the present whereabouts of his works.

Lise Holst, William College Museum of Art, Lawrence Hall, Williamstown, Massachusetts 01267.

Cecil Piment, British architect: whereabouts of his collection of correspondence and memorabilia; for a biography of his close friend Geoffrey Scott, author of *The Architecture of Humanism*.

Mervyn Secret, "Halcyon", PO Box 395, Walpole, New Hampshire 03608.

Paul Rotha, documentary-film maker and theorist: photographs, letters, reminiscences, etc., sought; for a study, and a retrospective of Rotha's work to be held in January 1982 at the Museum of Modern Art, Oxford.

Lynne Fredlund, Oxford Film Makers Workshop, The Stables, North Place, Headington, Oxford OX3 9HY.

Whistler-Ruskin trial, 1877-78: any private information or reminiscences; for a book in progress.

Robin Spencer, Department of Fine Art, University of St Andrews, St Andrews, Fife KY16 9AL.

T. Hewitt Myring (or Myrigh), engineer (?) working in Bolivia c. 1900, when he photographed excavations of Moche pottery in the Chicama Valley, northern Peru; whereabouts of these photographs, and of possible notes and drawings, sought; also information about any surviving descendants.

B. K. de Boek, Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde, PO Box 212, 2300 AE, Leiden, Netherlands.

Str Flinders Petrie (1853-1942), archaeologist: reminiscences, private letters or other information sought, especially from those who dug with him; for a biography.

Margaret S. Drower, 8 Willenhall Avenue, Barnet, Herts EN5 1LN.

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch ("Q"): letters from "Q" sought to establish basis for archive; all letters will be returned after copying; the project has the approval of Miss Foy Quiller-Couch.

A. L. Rowse, Trenarren House, St Austell, Cornwall.

Donald Sutherland (1915-78), American classicist, translator and critic: whereabouts of any correspondence, drafts of stories or essays; for editions of his letters and essays.

Lynn Martin, English Department, Nassau Community College, Garden City, New York 11530.

Leslie Wilson, artist: whereabouts of a watercolour painting by him, which was reproduced on the dust-jacket of the novel *Theirs Saxon* (1927) by my grandfather G. Frederick Clarke; or of any surviving copies of the dust-jacket.

Mary Bernard, 3 Willow Walk, Cambridge.

The eagle's eye view

By Robert Browning

ARNOLD TOYNBEE:

The Greeks and Their Heritage
334pp. Oxford University Press.
£12.50.
0 19 215256 4

Few men knew Greece so well as Arnold Toynbee. Steeped in Greek literature as a schoolboy at Winchester, he went on to study the history and philosophy of Greece at Balliol, and then to spend a year from 1911 to 1912 wandering in Greece and Asia Minor, learning to know the land and the people, their language and their thoughts. Long before the days of the tourist he had penetrated, often on foot, to the remotest regions to look, listen and talk. He saw the terrible events of 1914 to 1918 through the eyes of Thucydides and Sophocles, and discerned in the history of the West in his own time a quality of tragic inevitability. Thus was born the idea of *A Study of History*, in which he went on, in the years from 1921 to 1953, to fit into his tragic pattern of genesis, growth, breakdown and disintegration the totality of human experience. It needed some pushing and pulling to make the facts fit the pattern. But Toynbee was never afraid to revise his views in the light of experience.

The publication of *A Study of History* made him a celebrity, a prophet, a guru. Books and lectures flowed from his pen, his other dicta were tape-recorded and made into books by lesser men. Few in the turbulent years of the Cold War and

its aftermath thought of him as a Hellanist. Yet his thoughts constantly returned to the ancient Mediterranean and to Greece in particular, for it was there that he had been faced with the fundamental problems of the development of human society, and there that he had found the germ of his answer to them. In 1955 there appeared his *Hellenism*, in 1965 the massive *Hannibal's Legacy*, in 1969 *Some Problems of Greek History*, and in 1973 *Constantine Porphyrogenitus and his World*, in which he surveyed the whole of the Byzantine period of Greek history. When he was forced to stop writing by a stroke in 1974 he had completed the first draft of *The Greeks and Their Heritage*. It is altogether fitting that a scholar who had begun to cover in 1910 with a paper on Herodotus should crown it with a study of tradition and innovation over more than three thousand years of Greek history.

The book shows signs of the lack of a final revision. There are repetitions, uncritical acceptance of views which recent research has undermined, apparently irrelevant digressions. But beware! Those who know *A Study of History* will recall that Toynbee's digressions are sometimes the most significant part of his text. There are perhaps signs, too, of the diminution in his phenomenal capacity for work which followed a severe heart attack in the early 1970s. Yet he still retains an almost Aristotelian gift of perceiving the general in a welter of particulars, and occasionally he displays almost blinding insight.

The pessimism which sometimes marked his middle years is gone, as is the religiously tinged mysticism of his early years, and which sometimes gave offence to the religious. The tone is tranquil,

rational, humane. Old age, maybe; but the old age of the eagle.

Toynbee's concern is with what four stages in the history of the Greek people inherited from their predecessors, how they used it, and whether or not it turned out to be a *damnosa hereditas*. The stages are the Mycenaean world, the Hellenic world, the Byzantine world, and the world of modern Greece. In *A Study of History* these are all treated as separate civilizations. But in the later volumes of that work the concept of civilizations as philosophically contemporaneous was already being replaced by an emphasis on the whole of history. From being cyclical, history was becoming linear - and sometimes teleological. In the present book there is little left of the metaphysics of discrete civilizations, nor is there much teleology. Greek history is seen as a whole - a whole of particular interest to the historian because of its long duration and its few catastrophic breaks, a whole in which the grip of the past can be seen with especial clarity.

The classical Hellenes, Toynbee argues, inherited nothing from the Mycenaean world to fuel their creative imagination, but not so much that they were dominated by it. The heritage of the Byzantines from the classical world contained two elements which distorted and inhibited the growth of Byzantine civilization - the incubus of the Eastern Roman Empire and that of the Hellenic *paideia*, a body of aesthetic and moral values anathema in an educational system. The Modern Greeks inherited from their Byzantine forebears these same fatal curses - in the form of the Great Idea and the Law of the Greek Question - together with the Byzantines' own antipathy to the

West. The difficulties of their heritage have been only partly surmounted. And like Homer's horsemen who leap from one moving steed to another, the Modern Greeks have opted - or been forced - to change civilizations. They now belong to the post-Christian Western world of nation-states. But like old warriors they bear the scars of long-forgotten battles.

All this is argued with the wealth of learning and the sharpness of perception we expect from the author. Few readers will find it all equally convincing. All who read it with care will find it challenging. To quibble over details would exceed the scope of a review. The reviewer was privileged to discuss parts of the draft with the author shortly before his death, and is touched to see how many trivial points he then made are taken up in footnotes. Perhaps one more general criticism will be permitted. It is that Toynbee does not give sufficient weight to the way in which the later Greeks - and no doubt some other peoples - are aware of having two pasts. The Byzantines knew that they had both a Hellenic and a Christian heritage. Gregory of Nazianzus rebukes those who wanted to reject the Hellenic element in their intellectual tradition as dangerous and inimical to religion; they make a great mistake. The emperor Alexius Comnenus, when he was accused of using church plate to pay for his wars, quoted in his defence the examples of David and Paracles. Nicephorus Blamyes, in the thirteenth century, cited Solomon and Marcus Aurelius as models of a terse and laconic style - an un-Byzantine virtue. The Greeks today have taken over - or have been taken over by - the intellectual

heritage of the Western world without entirely abandoning their own Byzantine and Hellenic pasts, often mediated by the Orthodox Church. This can be a position of strength rather than of weakness. It is not quite true to say with Toynbee that "political liberation has entailed for the Modern Greeks a violent break with all their cultural heritages".

There are several detailed appendices to the book. In the last of these, on Geminus Plathon's Totalitarian Hellenism, Toynbee gives a conventional account of Plathon's Neoplatonism and his utopian political projects. Then he comes to Plathon's revival of pre-Christian Hellenic religion. Was this nonsense, as most scholars have maintained from the fifteenth to the twentieth century? No, says Toynbee. Christianity gave man licence to exploit the whole of the non-human residua of Nature. Today we realize that this road leads to universal destruction. The non-human part of Nature is as divine as the human, and we violate its rights at our peril. "Plathon had the nerve to re-evolve these banished gods . . . and to present them in their authentic role as symbols of the divinity inherent in non-human Nature." The old wizard has once again illuminated things with a new light. Never mind whether it is the unadulterated light of truth. It makes us think, and that is what Toynbee tried to do through sixty-five years of active life.

This is not Toynbee's greatest book, nor even one of his greatest. But it is a striking memorial to the place of Greece in the thought of the man whom W. H. McNall called "the most famous historian of his time and the most controversial".

Between love and strife

By Malcolm Schofield

M. R. WRIGHT (Editor):

Empedocles: The Extant Fragments
364pp. Yale University Press. £28.
0 300 02475 4

The recent history of Empedocles scholarship is a curious one. If at any point in most of our lifetimes prior to 1965 you had asked a scholar of Greek philosophy to refer you to a reliable account of Empedocles' physical system, he would probably have had little hesitation in recommending Burnet's *Early Greek Philosophy*, first published in 1892 and still (in its fourth edition) excellent value. In particular, he would have been unlikely to entertain qualms about Burnet's presentation of Empedocles' cosmology. Was Empedocles' cosmos created by separation from an original unity (Anaximander's) or by conglomeration from an original plurality (like that of the ancient atomists)? Burnet replied: both. It is known that Empedocles posited a never-ending cycle in which, owing to the alternate dominance of two forces he called love and strife, the mass of the universe oscillated between a condition of total unity and one of division into the four elements. According to Burnet, Empedocles held that one world (of which our own is an instance) is formed as diversity emerges from total unity and another world as plurality once more merges into unity.

In 1965 three scholars, working quite independently in three different countries, published essays arguing that this *idee reçue* of Empedocles' system was wrong. Friedrich Solmsen (USA) and Uvo Hölscher (Germany) in the learned *Journal*, and Jean Bollack (France) in the first instalment of what proved to be a four-volume work. According to the alternative conception advanced by Bollack and Solmsen in particular, Empedocles posits the creation of a single world only in his *genesis*: revolution of his cosmic *kosmos*, its basic structure - a central earth, surrounded by masses of water and air (and in the heavens) fire - is due to division from an original unity, but its "cosmotic triles of mortal things" - plants, beasts, men, gods - are formed by merging and mixture of the distinct elements into unity once more. This new proposal made sense to these scholars as a new way of seeing the evidence. British scholar, Denis O'Brien, had judged that the *idee reçue*, although correct, was in need of comprehensive defence and clarification. And in an article of 1967 followed by a book in 1969, delayed by the need to meet the arguments of the opposition, he published his epologia.

In the next few years a number of leading students of Greek philosophy declared themselves convinced by the new view of Empedocles, among them C. H. Kahn, A. A. Long and Jaap Mansfeld. But interest in this topic has faded as quickly as it burgeoned; and the *idee reçue* probably retains its hold over most who look into Empedocles' fragments, thanks to its appearance in such standard works as Kirk and Raven's *Presocratic Philosophers* (1957) and the second volume of Guthrie's *History of Greek Philosophy* (1965, as luck would have it). The fact is that Empedocles is not, like Heraclitus, Parmenides, and Zeno, a thinker of aliding appeal to philosophers; and the controversy I have described has so far failed to suggest to historians of Greek philosophy profitable new lines of enquiry - not altogether deservedly, since the great philosophical merit of the new proposals is the higher degree of determinacy. Empedocles' notions of creation: he permits us to ascribe to him, and his great historical merit is that it brings him into closer and more intelligible interplay with the ideas of his predecessors, than does the *idee reçue*.

One, therefore, turns with an unusual, and somewhat complicated sense of anticipation to M. R. Wright's new edition of the fragments, which has itself been in the making since the early 1960s. Perhaps unfairly, for the first task of an editor is not to speculate about his or her author but to present him as completely and economically to

the reader as possible. For example, anyone who consults an edition of Empedocles will want authoritative guidance on the poet's life (not to mention the sensational leap into Etna by which he is alleged to have met his death), his writings, and - a particularly tricky and extremely important question - the grounds for allocating particular fragments to one or his poems rather than the other. All this is crisply supplied by Wright. As for the fragments themselves, she presents each quotation with adequate context, listing of citations, and *apparatus criticus*, and in her commentary gives a translation together with brief but valuable discussion of the point the quoting author was making, as well as notes on Empedocles' verses. The notes follow the usual pattern in commentaries on classical texts. They contain much succinct information (including many useful references), which the editor never allows to obscure the main philosophical point of a text.

The careful labour necessary to produce such an edition of a poet whose life is controversial, as is the reader's gratitude. Mrs Wright includes only extracts believed to contain Empedocles' own words, unlike Diels-Kranz and Bollack, who provide (and in Bollack's case discuss) numerous reports of his views by other ancient authors. In this respect her edition (the only complete one written for the English-speaking reader) is less useful than theirs. On the other hand its utility is enhanced by excellent commentary, and indexes, including an especially good and complete *index verborum*.

In his ordering of the fragments Mrs Wright will command a good deal of broad assent, despite some controversial choices, of which the placing of Fr 35 after all the cosmological fragments (Fr 37-56) is the most importantly questionable. Her rationale for it, however, is based on an uncompromising defence of the *idee reçue* of Empedocles' cosmology and will fail to satisfy many. This is not just because they will think her wrong (as I do myself). It is rather that the debate on the question revealed, if nothing else, how elusive is much of the evidence on which interpretation must rest, partly because

Empedocles' own modes of expression are ambiguous. Mrs Wright contributes to make the most obscure and controversial text of all (Fr 173-5) sound plain sailing, in her introduction and commentary alike. She discusses briskly with Fr 22, a crucial, much disputed text here called "wisdom", and gives the reader no sense of the alternatives he needs to weigh, nor of the issues which turn upon his decision, but only dismissal of the confusions of other scholars. She rightly makes much of the support the *idee reçue* may derive from Aristotle, but does not pause to let us wonder whether Aristotle might be mistaken, as Simplicius thought in one pertinent text misread by her (Cael. 528, 11-14; 530, 16-22). In sum, 1965 was a year when Empedocles came to be seen as a philosopher whose thought was rich in alternative possibilities. This hope is dashed in the treatment of his cosmology and theory of change offered in the present work.

Something similar happens when Mrs Wright turns to *Purifications*. In his *Persephone* (1971), Günther Zuntz published a new edition of the fragments and a commentary full of acute and sympathetic learning and of intense imagination. He argued that it was chiefly by the telling of myths that Empedocles communicated his vision of man as a fallen god, doomed to a cycle of reincarnations in mortal bodies; first a myth of the underworld, exploited by Plato's *Republic*, in which the wretchedness of the destiny of the fallen spirits was vividly portrayed, and then a myth of a golden age before the fall when love reigned supreme (which included a theology). His account (like much of his work on the text) is rejected by Mrs Wright, who sees only metaphors where Zuntz bears mythical resonances and detects mythical incidents. She objects that the fragments "do not need any such imaginative framework". But as one reads through her notes and is left without much idea of how the fragments on the mysteries of incarnation may have fitted into one connected narrative.

Mrs Wright is at her best when exploring in her introduction some of the fundamental philosophical ideas

of the two poems. She brings out well both the originality and the difficulties of Empedocles' conception of the four elements or "roots" and of their mixture. And she makes a most interesting attempt (in Chapter 3) to set the religious ideas of *Purifications* within the cosmological and metaphysical framework of *On Nature*. This chapter is packed with fresh suggestions and arguments which constitute a major contribution to a difficult and much discussed topic. She proposes that when Empedocles talks in *Purifications* of divine spirits in a state of bliss, feasting together, we are to read this not as the consequence of freely chosen original sin, but as the inevitable fragmentation of primordial perfect mixture by the impersonal force of Strife. Men, insofar as they are divine spirits, are so because they are thinkers; and all thinkers are conceived of as fragments of the substance of a perfect divine thinker, in whom they will one day be united again.

Like other recent accounts, notably those of Jonathan Barnea in his *Presocratic Philosophers* (1979) and Kahn in his *Retractions* (1971) to his notable essay of 1960, Mrs Wright decisively abandons the idea that Empedocles' thought of such spirits as essentially incorporeal Cartesian conceptions. Her distinctive preoccupation is with the moral psychology and the physiology of the Spinozistic beings she takes Empedocles to be considering. She treats the objective physical necessities of his metaphysics and the personal "I" by which an fallen spirit recalls his identity as intelligibly compatible aspects of a single reality. It may well be doubted whether she (or any philosopher) has yet laid enough to make his sort of philosophical position intelligible. Here, at any rate, is a theme which deserves to capture more philosophical attention: than was attracted by this controversy of 1965.

Sources of guidance

By George Parfitt

RICHARD S. PETERSON:

Imitation and Praise in the Poems of Ben Jonson
247pp. Yale University Press. £37.05.
0 300 02586 6

Almost 250 pages on Ben Jonson's poems of praise may not sound a lot of fun, certainly to such as Professor Adams, whose Jonson is a mixture of Falstaff and Gargantua. Moreover Richard Peterson is particularly concerned with the way in which Jonson's praising is articulated through imitation of the classics: ghosts of pedantic Jonson may be expected to walk again, restless in the scholarly night. In fact, however, to anyone seriously interested in Jonson and/or in methods of literary composition Peterson has written a fascinating book.

The basis of *Imitation and Praise* is narrow, the author concentrating on selected poems of praise and devoting complete chapters to the elegy on Shakespeare and the eulogy on Donne. But Peterson is aware of the narrowness of his focus and knows that to separate the poems of praise from the rest of Jonson's work is artificial. More particularly, he understands that praise and satire are closely related in Jonson and that, at any given time, what he is doing in one genre is likely to be cognate with what he is doing in others. Through sensible cross-reference Peterson keeps a reader aware of such connections: his book is deep and narrow, but it suggests the breadth which it sensibly denies itself.

Peterson's book is a manifestation of the increasing interest in Jonson's poetry in recent years, and to some extent it is the full working out of the editorial and critical decisions and perceptions of other scholars (as the author himself acknowledges), but it is also a book which points forward. Peterson calls his book "a small beginning": it is more than that, but part of its merit is that it does suggest "ways into the poems that will issue in further explorations".

Peterson is concerned to demonstrate that Jonson's praise is not mere flattery and that his imitation is not pedantry. His method necessarily involves showing in detail how a Jonson poem is built up and from what materials, and this gives the book a fairly dense texture; but Peterson writes clearly, with economy and enthusiasm. He draws on the work done by editors of Jonson's poems in identifying classical allusions and "transformations", and he adds to our awareness of these as well as valuably demonstrating Jonson's active use of tradition and metaphor (as distinct from arcane or ornate learning). Anyone who may wonder how such an approach can add to an appreciation of Jonson's poems of praise would do well to read the chapter on the Shakespeare elegy, which ought to settle for ever the hash of those who see the tribute as grudging and mean-minded.

Peterson's Jonson is serious and witty, immensely energetic, learned and at the same time deeply concerned with the society in which he lived. Jonson's great effort was to bring his study of the past to bear on his analysis of the present. A traditionalist, he felt the past should provide "guides" rather than "commanders" (as so often, his own formula gives the best account of what he is up to). So Uvedale or the Roca embody the

virtues of plenitude and consistency which Jonson admired and can be seen as a living demonstration of the relevance of classical ethics: the past is a weight or responsibility, but it need not be a burden. In Bunyanesque terms, the past may provide the path to salvation, rather than being a load to be shed before salvation is possible.

There are two important areas which Peterson's achievement suggests might profitably be studied further. First, the matter of tradition. Peterson is rightly anxious to make the point that Jonson's sense of the past is "plastic" rather than inert. He claims that "The entrenched notion that many of the ideas treasured in the poems are simply commonplace, combined with the frequent assumption that Jonson is essentially static and unchanging entities, has militated against a recognition of the often exquisite specificity of Jonson's use of words, themes, and motifs" and his book is admirable in its demonstration of how Jonson "turns" that which he imitates. But the argument for continuity is conducted in terms of Jonson's use of classical formulations, and there is interesting further work to be done on the ways in which he "turns" ethical positions in earlier and contemporary English thought and on how the native tradition has drawn into itself classical attitudes well before Jonson's birth. Jonson's position is less isolated from the native tradition than an unwary reader of Peterson might suspect.

The other area needing further development concerns Jonson's involvement with the welfare of his own society. His ethics are social and secular, rather than private or mystical. Unless the individual is "round within himself, and straight", he will be socially hollow and useless; the cultivation of the individual's ethical soundness is, for Jonson, admirable primarily because the health of society depends upon the health of the individuals who comprise it. It follows that a study of Jonson's strategies of praise should ideally include discussion of his relationship to his society. One of the regrettable, and a slightly paradoxical consequence of Peterson's concentration on Jonson-the-man is a failure to look seriously at what his career and works have to tell us about the social and political situation of the time.

There are particular statements in the book which are questionable. It is, for example, an over-simplification to speak of Macro, in *Sejanus*, as being "pulled up" to replace Sejanus upon his fall since part of the play's tension comes from the fact that Macro is gradually "pulled up" before Sejanus's fall. It is similarly misleading to see Crites, in *Cynthia's Revels*, as simply a "foil to the shapeless Amorphus" and to discuss the womb/tomb nexus in the *Cary/Morison* ode without reference to the fact that this is a widely used metaphor in the literature of the time. But these are small points in a book which has been attractively produced and which is generally excellent in its scholarship.

Articles on American and British Literature: An Index to Selected Periodicals, 1950-1977 by Larry B. Corse and Sandra B. Corse has just been published (413pp. Swallow Press/Oxford University Press. £18. 0 8404 0408 0). The volume lists critical articles on selected major writers in each of the national literatures according to a chronological plan, from Beowulf and Chaucer to the twentieth-century classics, and also includes a section on Commonwealth writers.

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Gulliver surprised while bathing by a young female Yahoo: one of the more than 400 illustrations by Grandville to a classic 1838 translation of Gulliver's Travels; they are reproduced in full in a new edition of the work (319pp. Great Ocean Publishers, 738 South 22nd Street, Arlington, Virginia 22202. \$37.50. 0 915556 06 5). Grandville, whose real name was Jean Ignace Isidore Gerard, was also noted for his illustrations to Don Quixote and La Fontaine's Fables; he died insane at the age of forty-four.

Stating the surmisable

By Peter Earle

F. BASTIAN:

Defoe's Early Life
378p. Macmillan. £15.
0 333 27432 6

Successful biographers of Daniel Defoe have always been uneasy aware that their work is going to be somewhat thin if they have to rely on facts which would be accepted by the average critical historian. Such evidence is particularly thin for the first forty-three years of his life from his birth in 1660 (the date is itself speculative) to that nadir of his career in 1703 when he was sentenced to the pillory and imprisonment in Newgate on a charge of seditious libel. The result is that all biographers have been forced to supplement his own work by extensive mining in Defoe's own huge output of over five hundred separate works, an oeuvre which is liberally sprinkled with hints, allusions and apparently autobiographical snippets.

F. Bastian has carried this method to its logical extreme and has managed to write a biography of three hundred pages covering just that period of Defoe's early life which is worst documented. The result, though clearly speculative, is on the whole convincing, even if one sometimes feels that the author is carried away by his own zeal for the hunt. He has a very sure touch for topographical detail and has made intelligent use of Defoe's famous *Tour through the Whole Island of Great Britain* (1724-6) and his less known but very impressive *Atlas Maritimus and Commercialis* (1728). Both these works clearly embody material collected by Defoe in travels carried out many decades before their publication and Bastian has used them to piece together many admittedly hypothetical journeys made by Defoe over much of Western Europe and as far afield as the Orkneys. The method of reconstruction is intriguing. Unusually detailed descriptions of certain places in the *Tour* or the *Atlas* catch the detective's eye. Bastian is then pieced together, often by reference to Defoe's novels and fictional travel stories. Thus Defoe's supposed visit to Italy in 1680 is reflected in the *Memoirs of a Cavalier* (1720) for the journey south and in *Coloured Jack* (1722) for the way home. Internal evidence in these works often suggests a date for such a journey, a gap in Defoe's known movements provides the opportunity and, hey presto! another piece of the puzzle is in place. The method is not perfect, but it is certainly imaginative and the book is a very readable and useful contribution to the study of Defoe.

could not have known about something or described it so well unless he had actually seen it for himself.

However, the works of Defoe, like the Bible, can always be plundered for both sides of an argument and Bastian must know as well as this reviewer the passage in *The Compleat English Gentleman* (published posthumously in 1890) where Defoe tells his gentleman reader that he does not have to travel himself to discover the world. "If he has not travelled in his youth, has not made the grand tour of Italy and France, he may make the tour of the world in books..." Most writers on Defoe tend to take this observation seriously and spend much of their time making a tour of the literature of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries in a search for the sources of Defoe's works. Bastian's tour is, for the most part, limited to Defoe's own works, which means that he often forgets an important part of a categorical statement which he makes near the beginning of his book. "Creative writing, of course, can never be spun out of thin air, but must always be a transmutation of the author's real or vicarious experience." Whether this is true is a matter for creative writers to decide but, if it is true, it is necessary for the possibility of vicarious as well as real experience to be considered in the process of sifting through Defoe's works.

The literary technique of moving fairly rapidly from the hypothetical to the definite which is apparent in Bastian's descriptions of Defoe's travels is matched by his exploration of the circle of Defoe's relatives, friends, partners and business associates. This is best illustrated in the development of the identity of "HF", the supposed author of *The Journal of the Plague Year* (1722), as Defoe's uncle Henry Fox - a vital identity for the treatment of much of Defoe's early life. On page 3, "the close correspondence... seems to require" such an identification. On page 10, the book "undoubtedly incorporates some real family history", while from page 11 onwards there is no further suggestion of hypothesis and Bastian can use his sound topographical knowledge of seventeenth-century London to develop an interesting descriptive piece on Defoe's childhood. The technique is repeated again and again in the book and whole networks of friends and acquaintances are built up from fragments of someone of that name in a poll-book or similar source and this development of a genealogical topographical background from the local histories and so on. The historian's instinctive suspicion of the method (the pitfalls are made very clear by recent demographic work on nominal linkage) have already been forestalled by the author in an early

disclaimer. "It may be objected, too, that what starts as a surmise sometimes ends up as a firm statement... While it is too much to hope to attain complete objectivity and eliminate inaccuracies entirely, perhaps these are the inevitable price of a picture which, while remaining substantially accurate, will be very much fuller than would otherwise be possible."

What can a reviewer do about an honest man? The fact is that Bastian's book is sufficiently convincing to make one think that it is substantially accurate and the result is that readers will now be able to learn much more about the early life of one of England's most enigmatic literary figures. They will learn about his childhood and education, his travels and his possible duel, his spiritual crisis, his varied and chequered business career. They will learn most of all about his involvement with King William III and the Whig leaders during the political and diplomatic crisis that followed the war with France in the 1690s. Much of this is new and very interesting, some of it based on Bastian's fresh attributions of a number of previously anonymous pamphlets to Defoe's pen. Such attributions may be convincing but they are certainly speculative like much of the rest of this biography and no reader should forget that Bastian's book is not a complete work of fiction, like some previous biographies of Defoe, but on the other hand it is much too hypothetical to be considered a work of totally acceptable fact.

Readers may also share this reviewer's feeling that, despite the author's industry and ingenuity, they still do not get to know the real Defoe, still do not understand what made this extraordinary man tick. Bastian considers many influences, including a shadowy mother and grandmother given hypothetical substance by inspired identifications from characters in Defoe's works. This is standard stuff for a biographer of Defoe and, although Bastian avoids the obvious pitfalls, he really takes us no nearer to the real reality than his predecessors. This is mainly because such a reality is almost certainly impossible to recover, but it is also a reflection of Bastian's method of developing his subject's biography. His parade of people who might have been related to Defoe or who might have known him, his imaginative reconstruction of places which Defoe might have visited, things he might have seen and things he might have done, are really taken up no nearer to the real reality than his predecessors. This is mainly because such a reality is almost certainly impossible to recover, but it is also a reflection of Bastian's method of developing his subject's biography. His parade of people who might have been related to Defoe or who might have known him, his imaginative reconstruction of places which Defoe might have visited, things he might have seen and things he might have done, are really taken up no nearer to the real reality than his predecessors.

GEORGE LEGGETT:

The Cheka

Lenin's Political Police

512pp. Clarendon Press: Oxford
University Press. £22.50.
0 19 822552 0

There can be few who have anything but distaste for the Soviet Union as it is today; even fewer who look back with admiration on the Stalin period. When it comes to the earlier years of the regime, however, distance seems to lend a certain enchantment. Unesco not long ago sponsored a much-advertised seminar on Lenin the Humanist; it could scarcely have got away with such an exercise if Stalin or Brezhnev had been the subject.

Yet this is the Lenin who in the 1880s was writing of famine relief, "Psychologically this talk of feeding the starving is nothing but an expression of the saccharine-sweet sentimentality so characteristic of our intelligentsia", and in 1918, after the victory, was telling his more squeamish followers, "When we are reproached with cruelty, we wonder how people can forget the most elementary Marxism".

This was understood in the West at the time even by its progressive intelligentsia, for whom the October Revolution and the new Bolshevik state had little attraction: the disturbing day-to-day events in Russia could not be concealed, and it was known that Lenin's rule had been rejected by the bulk of the country's own liberal intelligentsia; the millions of refugees, too, made a bad impression. Bertrand Russell, after his meeting with Lenin, spoke in such terms as "his guffaw at the thought of those massacred made my blood run cold" and "my most vivid impressions were of bigotry and Mongolian cruelty". The latter observation recalling Rosa Luxemburg's earlier charge of "Tartar-Mongolian savagery" against the Bolsheviks. The point was taken, too, by most Russian socialists, and even by old friends of Lenin like Maxim Gorky, who kept up a barrage of attacks, until his paper was suppressed, on what he called "an autocracy of savages" ruling "by threats of starvation and massacre".

Today, however, there is a tendency - less marked perhaps than a few years ago - to think of Lenin's Russia as a pure experiment which was spoiled by his successors. Somewhere in that strange personality and those fiery events, nostalgic progressives seek and find an image of socialist humanity, while the Old Bolsheviks seem as exemplars of revolutionary purity, agree with them or not. Yet Lenin's old Party was full of villainous characters like Stalin, Kaganovich, Yagoda, Mokhish, Shkiryatov, Ullrich and Kodrov, who were to prove every bit as evil as the Richmanns and Haydnichs who were in fact their imitators.

It is no doubt both common and natural for Utopians to project their fantasies into the spatial or temporal distance. This was not true, however, of the Anarchists, who from Makhno on were sceptical of the idea that the all-powerful Bolshevik State, however "proletarian", was the means for creating a juster social order. In this, they were fortified by Bakunin's warning against the "those previous workers having become rulers or representatives of the people will cease being workers; they will look at the workers from their halts, they will represent not the people but themselves...". Ha who doubts it does not know human nature. Add to this Rosa Luxemburg's criticism of the Lenin-Trotsky regime that the crushing of a free press and the end of free elections must lead to bureaucracy, despotism and terror, and the whole of the Leninist, Stalinist, or deceptively, is prefigured.

Because the Bolshevik Party took power in a state where the social structure did not conform to accepted criteria for a Marxist takeover, the absence of the condi-

tions for "socialism" could only be compensated for by force. As Pyatkov, one of Lenin's favourite disciples, was to say, "Lenin was the man who had the courage to make a proletarian revolution first and then to set about creating the objective conditions theoretically necessary as a preliminary to such a revolution". Thus, "according to Lenin, the Communist Party is based on the principle of coercion, which doesn't recognize any limitations or inhibitions."

This is all very well, as far as conscious motive and rationalization are concerned. But at a deeper level one can surely see in such theorizing precisely the "false consciousness" which Marxism attributes to other ideologies. As Orwell put it, the Russian Communists "never had the courage to recognize their own motives. They pretended, perhaps they even believed, that they had seized power unwillingly and for a limited time and that just around the corner there lay a paradise where human beings would be free and equal", but their true motive was power: "power is not a means, it is an end".

It seems unlikely that Marxist interpretations of the October Revolution, though still found in attenuated or contorted form in some circles, will be of much further use to historians. The more fruitful approach would seem to lie in the special characteristics of Russia on the one hand, and the nature of classless sects on the other. As Russell saw, Lenin did not much resemble a Western reformer. The real prototypes of the Bolshevik mentality are to be sought, rather, in Thomas Vener or John of Leiden. This is brought out by Norman Cohn in the later editions of his magnificent *The Pursuit of the Millennium*, which points out that the Communists, (like the Nazis) "have been inspired by fantasies which are downright archaic". The Bolshevik leadership, Cohn notes, "alike in its social situation and the crudity and narrowness of its thinking, strikingly recalls the prophets of medieval Europe".

The factor common to all these classless movements, Cohn adds, was that they envisaged the coming society "as a state of total community, a society wholly unanimous in its beliefs and wholly free from inner conflict". In the struggle to achieve this, each formed, and felt entitled to form, "a restlessly dynamic and utterly ruthless group which, obsessed by the apocalyptic fantasy and filled with the conviction of its own infallibility, set itself infinitely above the rest of humanity and recognised its sole duty as that of its own mission". The difference between these fanatic revolutionaries of different periods lay in the striking, but ultimately superficial, phraseology in which they couched their beliefs. In each case they employed the most advanced intellectual dialect of the time - in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Theology, in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries Science. The deeper structure of the belief remained much the same.

Russia was uniquely suited to sectarian takeover. Even Engels had conceded that a Blanquist-type coup in the capital - undesirable elsewhere - might be the way to a Russian revolution, owing to the extreme centralization of the apparatus of government. Even in early Tzarist times bizarre decrees could take months to reach outlying districts, but would then be rigorously enforced to the letter. Once a regime achieved power over the huge size of the country, for from being a disintegrative factor, tending to neutralize, or soak up, local disaffection, as it does to this day while the riots in Gdansk were known throughout Poland and the rest of the world within hours, the riots in Novocherkassk were muffled to mere rumour for weeks and months.

Nothing is more astonishing than the docility with which, for the time being at least, the country accepted in 1917 the decision of a few thousand armed men in Petrograd. Indeed, after the transfer of power

The tactics of terror

By Robert Conquest

to Moscow, the vulnerability of a Russian regime to a blow at its centre is strikingly illustrated in the Left Socialist Revolutionary rising of July 1918, to which Dr Leggett devotes a fascinating chapter. The rising, ill-prepared and without very clear aims, nearly overthrew the Bolsheviks. The Left SRs deployed only about 2,000 armed men, and were opposed by an even smaller force, mainly of the Bolshevik Latvian mercenaries, since the Russian regiments, as the Bolshevik Commander-in-Chief Vatsitel tells us in his memoirs, remained neutral.

From the centre a continual effort of repression was needed. The Terror was Lenin's two-limb, far exceeding anything to be found in Marxist revolutionary theory. Though Marx and Engels often called for ruthless measures and praised the Jacobins, Engels in fact wrote to his partner that "the blame for the Reign of Terror in 1793 lies almost exclusively with the over-nervous bourgeois demeaning himself as a patriot, the petty bourgeois crapping their pants, and the mob of riff-raff who know how to profit from terror". Lenin, on the other hand, spoke as early as 1908 of the Jacobin Terror as almost the best thing about the French Revolution, and urged "real, nation-wide terror, which reinvigorates the country and through which the Great French Revolution achieved glory". He was already asking in December 1917, "Surely we shall not fall to find our Fouquier-Tiville?" The squalid brutality of the Jacobin commissioners was matched and outmatched by the Cheka. They even had their *Carniers*; and the *noyades* were not of individuals but of whole barge-loads.

Despite complaints from many Bolsheviks, as 1918 wore on Lenin's voice was continually raised in favour of more terror: "The energy and mass nature of the terror must be encouraged; 'apply mass terror immediately'. Leggett does not concentrate on the ensuing brutalities and injustices, though enough of these are detailed to make an impressive indictment of the Cheka and its sponsors. What seems to emerge is a combination of the brutality of fanaticism with a more archaic brutality deriving from that centuries-old heritage which, as Chekhov put it, weighs down on every Russian like a huge rock. It was a particularly nasty combination.

The use of hostages, much encouraged by Lenin personally, became standard practice. A decree of August 10, 1918, provided that twenty-five to thirty hostages should be taken from among the wealthier inhabitants in each small grain-growing district, and that they were to be answerable with their lives for the region's delivery of grain. Such treatment was not confined to class enemies and members of the Left SRs and other socialist parties, for in February 1919 the arrest war ordered of members of the regime's own local committees in districts where the clearance of snow from railway lines was unsatisfactory; these peasant hostages were to be shot if there was no improvement. (Hostage policy was not always appropriate, in fact. After the Anarchist bomb attack on the headquarters of the Moscow Communist Party on September 25, 1919, Dzerzhinsky ordered the immediate execution of all members of the Constitutional Democratic Party, as well as former gendarmes and aristocrats held in Moscow jails, and hundreds were shot before the order was rescinded.)

In *The Bolsheviks* Adam Ulam concludes that "Far from being a regrettable necessity, the Bolshevik Terror was one of the factors which made their victory in the Civil War more difficult". But even if excess of terror can be seen objectively as operating against the Bolsheviks' own interests, it remains true that an unrepresentative and increasingly unpopular minority could not have retained power without the ruthless repression of its enemies or rivals. And thus Leggett, though his intention is no more than to catalogue

the Cheka, first avatars of the Soviet Secret Police, and to deploy from a vast documentation the facts of its structure and activities, by that token gives us a broad insight into the whole Lenin period. He alternates chapters on the organizational and jurisdictional development of the Cheka with clear and full accounts of its actions, and he generally succeeds in the delicate job of establishing the real scope of the Terror from official and unofficial sources.

Lenin found his Fouquier-Tiville in Felix Dzerzhinsky, that strange tormented fanatic, who, though politically naive and playing little part in policy discussion, shared many of Lenin's characteristics, including the belief that Lenin was always to be obeyed. His biography is inextricably intermingled - and rightly so - with that of his organization in Leggett's book. The more famous of Dzerzhinsky's subordinates also stalk these pages - Peters and Lachin, Artuzov and Agronov, Evdokimov and Redens - most of whom were to die at the hands of their successors in the 1930s, some to be rehabilitated in the 1960s.

Dr Leggett naturally devotes a great deal of space to the largest-scale repression that followed from the Bolsheviks' misunderstanding and mishandling of the peasant problem (an ideological albatross which hangs round the Soviet neck to this day). Lenin had originally planned a transition stage of "temporary alliance with the whole peasantry" before launching into full "socialism", but in May 1918 he decided that this stage was over. During the next few years, as he was to put it, the Bolshevik government "sought to obtain a sufficient quantity of grain from the peasants by way of requisition, then appropriation, then to the industrial and urban areas, and thus to obtain Communist production and distribution". This was effected by sending armed squads of urban Communists into the countryside, but a Marxist political manoeuvre was also envisaged, in that an alliance was now sought with the "village poor", or "rural proletariat". Class war was to be ignited in the villages. In fact, the village proletariat was not a coherent or productive class as the true proletariat might claim to be, but little more than a lumpenproletarian stratum which, however deserving of sympathy from non-Marxists, was totally unfit to play the pseudo-Marxist role now thrust on it. The result of this head-on assault was 245 peasant risings in 1918, and ninety-one to about a third of Bolshevik territory in

1919; culminating in the major rebellions of Antonov and Makhno which swept whole provinces and needed ruthless intervention over months by the Cheka and the Army. A further result was the dreadful famine of 1921, of which the best that can be said is that at least it was not consciously inflicted like the worse famine ten years later, which finally broke the back of the free peasantry, and with it of Russian agriculture.

The Revolution which had promised peace, bread and land thus produced instead civil war, famine and (after a few years) the serfdom of collectivization. The Russian dead in the First World War amounted to rather less than two million. If Russia had fought on, perhaps losing another million in battle, that would still compare favourably with the death toll of the Civil War, the Terror and the famines and epidemics which resulted from Lenin's policies: an excess mortality, on Soviet statistics, of not less than 14 million up to 1922.

George Leggett has produced not only an indispensable history of the Cheka considered as an institution, but also a history of the struggles to retain power as seen from the point of view of the organs of power - the clearest of all the possible perspectives on the essential issues of the period which marked the foundation of the Soviet State. As to the end product, the Stalin and post-Stalin order was either the natural result of Leninism, or else it was an unforeseen aberration. If it were the former, the case against Lenin rests. If the latter, he is shown to have submitted the country to a murderous ordeal on the basis of a dogma which proved defective. Either way, the events described in Dr Leggett's book were crucial - a point which the Cheka's present embodiment, the KGB, is proud to confirm in its historical publications.

Union Soviétique de Lénine à Staline Hélène Carrère d'Encausse, Professor of Political Science at the University of Paris, first published in 1979, has now appeared in an English translation by Valence Ionescu. Volume 1, *Lenin: Revolution and Power* (279pp. Longmans, Paperback, £4.95, 0 582 29539 9) covers the rise of Bolshevism, the civil war, the NEP and the power struggle after Lenin's death. Volume 2, *Stalin: Order through Terror* (269pp. Longmans, Paperback, £4.95, 0 582 29560 5) deals with such topics as the "Instruments of Stalinist power", the "terrorist State" and the "Great Patriotic War". The bibliography covers original and secondary sources.

Vita Sanctae Coletae 1381-1447

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commentary

The drama of justice . . .

By Oswyn Murray

The Orestes
Oliver Theatre

The new version of the *Orestes* at the National Theatre is the most important theatrical event for many years, and the best account of any Greek play that I have seen. It demonstrates that it is not necessary to modernize and bowdlerize Greek myth in order to make it acceptable to a contemporary audience, and consequently exposes the flabbiness and cowardice behind (for instance) the RSC's recent attempt to produce a *Reader's Digest* version of the Greeks. This production is the classic account for our generation of the *Orestes*, against which we must judge all attempts to stage ancient tragedy.

The National Theatre's triumph rests on two foundations. The first is the acceptance of Greek tragedy as a ritual event: the aim of Peter Hall's production is to persuade us into believing in and partaking of this ritual. It is primarily this purpose that the masking of the actors and the use of men to portray all the characters serve; the effect, erroneously called alienation, is to cause us to see beyond the individual situation to the universal it embodies. In such a conception of tragedy the chorus ceases to be a problem; it is our comment on the meaning of the events we witness, and on our unavailing desires to change or avert what can only be exorcized by the ritual we are undergoing. This interpretation of the *Orestes* is correct; but the achievement of causing it to be accepted by a modern audience is almost miraculous. At the end of the trilogy, after five hours of theatre, the Furies are tamed and led off to their new home in Attica as the Kind Ones, through the audience. The chorus calls on us to stand: "Silence while the Kind Ones pass; now echo our chorus, raise your own cry." Suddenly we realize that we have accepted this experience: we are the believers, the people of Athens witnessing the birth of a new cult, as the procession passes through our midst.

The second foundation of this production is the magnificent translation by Tony Harrison, surely the best acting translation of Aeschylus ever written (120pp. Rex Collings. £3.50. 086036 178 0). It gives the impression of catching every image and every nuance of meaning that is dramatically significant, while recreating Aeschylus' traditional grandeur and sonority. The cause of this success lies in Harrison's appeal to the English equivalents of the archetypal patterns of language behind Aeschylus' poetry: Harrison's rhythms, assonances, rhymes, word plays and alliterations recall us to the traditions of Anglo-Saxon poetry. The language is both simple and dense, relying heavily on the consonantal strength of English and its richness in gutturals and jingles.

Father, father, do you in doom, kept hidden by death, what can you know of your grave-gloom unbreached by light or breath?

What words can worm their way through the soul's soft of sorrow what words of bright day follow your dark sorrow?

From all the bloodstained graves they have buried and blocked your bones, never building, held by night's death-heavy anchorages.

Only once or twice in the five hours of theatre does Harrison's step falter. Peter Hall's direction, and Harrison, Birwistle's music, respect this achievement of a major dramatic poet, and faithfully subordinate themselves to his text. Nothing in the performance directs attention away from the words, every rhythm and cadence being carefully placed in the floor, the axis of a man in an

put on records (as surely as it should be presented on radio), before it leaves the National Theatre repertoire.

The restraint of Peter Hall is the more surprising, since Aeschylus is the most theatrical of the Greek tragedians, a director's gift. His choruses are enmeshed in the action, his aim is a succession of scenes demanding almost the treatment of a tableau; in imagery and dramatic technique he is an artist of the visual. Peter Hall knows how to make a visual point: for instance the attitudes of Orestes and Pylades in the *Choephoroi* reflect the archaic smile of their masks, so that we seem to see the Greek statues of the Acropolis jerking into life. But the hallmark of this production is its restraint in visual terms: this has the remarkable effect of redirecting attention within the trilogy. We are used to regarding the *Agamemnon* as the most successful play, the *Eumenides* as ritually important but dramatically impossible, and acceptable only as a sort of intellectual Hegelian synthesis of bloodguilt. The *Choephoroi* merely links the two.

In this production it is the *Agamemnon* which suffers: the great scenes which it is composed of are subordinated to the dramatic thrust of the trilogy as a whole, and not allowed to usurp our attention. Contrarily that much neglected play, the *Choephoroi*, becomes the great dramatic moment of the trilogy, exhibiting a psychological and a poetic force which will be a revelation to those who see it. The most powerful single scene in the trilogy is in fact the lamentation of the Trojan slaves at the gravemound of their murdered conqueror, Agamemnon, and the recognition scene of Orestes and Electra. One begins to see why that scene was so important to the Greeks, why it was copied by Sophocles and parodied by Euripides. Thus the *Choephoroi* emerges as a play of uniquely consistent mood and intensity; the result is to place the final play, the *Eumenides*, in its proper perspective, as a genuine reconciliation of genuine conflicts.

Treated like this, with respect, as a work of art which has the right to make its own meaning clear, and for which the director must merely make sure that each part is given its proper value, without imposing his own superfluous unity of interpretation, the trilogy reveals its significance as a plurality of insights into a single problem, the origins and the basis of civilization.

What Earth breeds is appalling. Monsters, meteors, sea, soil, space, things that fly, creep, crawl, of all these horrors the human race is the terror that tops them all.

Or as Sophocles put it, deliberately echoing Aeschylus, "Wooden are many on earth, and the greatest of these is man."

To us the events in Greek tragedy are myths, to the Greeks they were real. Historically speaking, the Greeks are right: we do not know what they knew about the origins of their world which is ours; we do not worship at the old chamber-tombs; when we discover them we strip them from our museums. Occasionally our complicity is joked, as it was this spring, after a local school-master in Buboea hired a bulldozer to bank holiday to remove illegally a treacherous mound of earth; he is now in prison. What he found was a tomb of the early third century BC, the earliest major monument in Greece, by more than two hundred years, at the turning point of the Dark Ages, when the ancient world, the mythic world, from the age of the Olympians to a half-slay metro, on the one hand, and a half-slay metro, on the other, was a world of a man in an

urn, with his burial shroud neatly folded in its neck; beside him a female skeleton burdened with gold ornaments, buried with her man and at the same time, beside her, a knife; elsewhere the royal horses buried on a pyre. For the first time we had clear archaeological evidence of what the Greeks had always known, the necessity for ritual murder in Greece in that heroic age which stands on the threshold of history. The world of Aeschylus was born from such ritual murders, and the *Orestes* is about the purification of religion and society from the taint



Head of Hera, from Olympia, c 500 BC; one of 170 illustrations in John Boardman's *An Introduction to Greek Sculpture*, just published (170pp. Athlone Press. £15. hardback 0 485 11196 9; £3.95. paperback 0 485 12033 X).

. . . and its music

By Paul Driver

The *Orestes* is almost as much a fulfilment for the composer, Harrison Birwistle, as it is for Peter Hall and Tony Harrison (and probably for Donyo Lasdun too). Birwistle's contribution is important not only because music runs almost continuously throughout the three presentations, but also because a passionate appetite for the Greek drama and interest in all aspects of Greek culture have informed his purely musical works since his "Refrains and Choruses" for which he won the 1957 "Tragedy" award of 1965 actually taken on the title might indicate the formal divisions of Greek plays: prologue, parados, episode, antistrophe, stasimon, and so on, in a powerful symmetrical arrangement. The opera *Punch and Judy* (1967) develops the manner of "Tragedy" into a violent parody of Aristophanic comedy, complete with its own chorus.

Then there are his "4 Loterides from a Tragedy" (1970) for clarinet and pre-recorded tape, and the "dramatic pastoral" *Down by the Greenwood Side* (1969), which is derived from a mummer's play but whose garish and masked dramatic style, as well as its language and raucous music, offer perhaps the nearest parallel to the present production of the *Orestes*. Birwistle's response to the Greeks is not just a matter of form and manner, though. The content of Greek mythology and especially the implications for a radically-minded composer of the Orpheus myth have been an obsessive concern. A series of works on the theme of Orpheus culminates in the "just-completed" long-awaited grand opera, *The Masque of Orpheus*, where the significance of the myth is most poignant for it allows Birwistle to do the radical thing he is always inclined to - building his edifice on the forbidden question of the medium: Why sing at all?

Birwistle recently explained that it is similarly the radical, "modern" aspect of Greek civilization itself that attracts him: the newly, abruptly established city-state whose foundation is depicted in the *Eumenides* and whose challenge to invent everything afresh, once its primitive roots had been severed, resembles the challenge of our contemporary modernism. Birwistle protests that he likewise has had to invent everything in his musical language from scratch. The highly-wrought simplicity of his best scores - their (very Greek) combination of extremes of brutality and lyricism - attests to the fact.

But essentially the *Orestes* is about the birth of the social order. By reflecting his own historical moment through the mirror of myth, Aeschylus reveals the tensions in all forms of social organization. His trilogy is therefore about bloodguilt, vendetta, clan loyalty against the city, about the origins of justice in retribution, about the fragility of all attempts at order. It is also, as the programme insists too much, about that modern myth, what Engels called "the historical defeat of the female sex", the transition from the old world of patriarchy to the new world of male domination. We may know as a fact that the institution of patriarchy never existed in history; but the myth of patriarchy remains essential for us to externalize in history the biological tensions which necessarily threaten society. This production of the *Orestes* succeeds in demonstrating the truth of the old and often ridiculed Marxist interpretation of the *Orestes*. Nature, the mother-right to avenge her daughter's sacrifice, to call down the Furies on the son who murders her, stands in conflict with culture, the demands of the state, the war effort, and ultimately the whole structure of justice and the social order. The compromise between these two forces in the final play is not time-bound, but a compromise basic to the existence of any form of social order. The world of Aeschylus is our world; perhaps we should remember that it is only a hundred generations since Homer lived.

Gluck's art is in every sense grave: the gravity of its musical idiom derives - in Arias like Alceste's "Divinités du Styx" or Orfeo's "che far senza Euridice?", helplessly repeating itself because immobilized in despair, or Phigénie's plea for her own death, "O toi qui prolonges mes jours" - from the funeral nature of the emotions of his characters and their reverent longing for a quietus. Neoclassicism is necessarily morbid, since it's an art which depends on the rubbing of graves (in the excavations at Herculanum) and on the misery of lamenting a lost and irretrievable past. The neoclassical artist, like Gluck's Alceste or Orfeo, is someone who conducts a rite of interment, and his triumph, like theirs in bringing back their spouses from death, is one of exhumation.

Janet Baker, as expected, heroically matches the challenge she has set herself. Her dramatic gift - except in that vituperative portrayal of Mozart's *Viellita* - has always been for suffering, calm and sacrificial composure. Her impersonations of Monteverdi's Penelope, Donizetti's

The three bass-clarinets together often recall the writing of "Nenia". The three baroque clarinets in unison, unforgettably strident, are like nothing else. The clarinet scream which tokens the appearance of the Furies to Orestes is a wonderful gesture. The musical activity is non-stop but layered and regulated with superb restraint. Except for some atmospheric effects on tape and an amusingly grotesque waltz for the chorus of Furies it rarely stoops to illustration. It is an abstract construction, gleamingly overwrought yet craggy and raw. It is excellently performed under the direction of Malcolm Bennett.

The music Birwistle's art, then, endows his incidental music for the *Orestes* with unusually rich resources. But the occasion is a fulfilment for him in another sense too. It is the highest reward of his professional undertakings as Music Director of the National Theatre, and solemnizes a relationship between his own musical development and the needs of the theatre that has been wholly reciprocal.

The music Birwistle has turned out for the trilogy is played by two antiphonal groups on either side of the central circular platform: a large percussion continuo and a quartet of three clarinets (using three types of instrument) and baritone. It is an exquisitely characteristic instrumentation. The percussions are chiefly responsible for pacing the chorus, and do so in a way that produces satisfying musical counterpoints between music and verse. A number of percussion instruments were specially invented for the show. (Birwistle did this before - in "Medusa" for ensemble) a set of pitched alldrums that can provide an omnisciently quiet bass-line; a bass psaltery; the extrapolated lower part of a marimbaphone. The variety of attack and colour he obtains from the regular array of drums is sufficiently dazzling, however. The bass psaltery, with the percussion a punctuating role - it offers along, sonorous chords at portentous moments, reminiscent of the cut-offs of both

to show how Aeschylus' concern with the roots of justice stems from a deep political commitment.

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"Tragedy" and "Silbury Air". The clarinets make more detailed commentary on the action, and form the substance of the occasional tutis or the accompaniment for the few choral songs.

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Galileo's first book on physics, published in 1632, has not been translated into English since the 17th century. Drake's version of the book is a masterpiece of translation, capturing the spirit of the original and making it accessible to a modern audience. The book is a masterpiece of translation, capturing the spirit of the original and making it accessible to a modern audience.

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commentary

Valedictions and reconciliations

By Peter Conrad

Alceste
Covent Garden

It's sadly fitting that Janet Baker should have chosen two works by Gluck - currently *Alceste* at Covent Garden, in the summer *Orfeo* at Glyndebourne - for her operatic valediction, because the works themselves, like all neoclassical art, are elegiac essays in regret and mournful leave-taking. Alceste volunteers to die to relieve her husband Admetus; Orfeo, reckless with grief, ventures into the underworld to reclaim Euridice. Their missions beyond life initiate them into the post-mortem condition of hastened resignation which is the ideal of neo-classicism, and which is imaged in its statuary - the serene and tranquil divinities described by Winkelmann, or the Pauline Borgheze of Canova whose flesh is sensual but chilled - because statues are the resurrected perfection of human beings, and have been made perfect by the bleeding away of perishable organic life. This is why a romantic hero like Don Giovanni, for whom the proof of reality is bodily sensation, is so imperilled by a statue; but it's the ambition of Gluck's people to stiffen into monuments, and one of the finest images in John Copley's production at Covent Garden poses Janet Baker, defiantly invoking the ministers of death, on a plinth over the prompt box which is lined up with the massive idol of Apollo behind her, whose solemn marble imperitability she will, once she has died, come to share.

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Ms Hanff, it must also be said, is the kind of person who keeps carbon copies of her letters. With time on her hands, and without an image of the recipient's face to restrain her, her letters soon passed the bounds of normal business decorum; she chattered on with a gossiping shrewdness about her finances and her neighbours, with a sort of swoony, over-the-top young-and-gay gush about what her favourite authors meant to her; she itemized the shortcomings of editors, chided the bookseller for not being prompt or logogenous or industrious or enough; in general, behaved with the characteristic monomaniacal self-absorption of the bookseller who thinks that the bookseller exists for the customer's comfort and convenience. How Marks and Co felt about all this is not recorded; but any objections they might have had were quashed by Helen Hanff's unquenchable, no doubt aided by her well-timed gifts of ham and eggs and oysters, at any rate, one member of the firm undertook replies of gradually diminishing stiffness, and a correspondence began that lasted for twenty years, from 1949 to 1969.

Maria Stuarda and Holst's *Saviti* (another wife who rescues her husband from premature death) were all commentaries on this abiding state. From Oratorio she has learnt a restful stillness, and on stage she's moving precisely because of her own restrained refusal to move. This steadfastness makes a moral icon of her, an image of trusting fidelity, not patience sitting on a monument but patience implacably growing into a monument. Such was the distinction of her fixed and unfaltering Feneles, like all neoclassical art, are elegiac essays in regret and mournful leave-taking. Alceste volunteers to die to relieve her husband Admetus; Orfeo, reckless with grief, ventures into the underworld to reclaim Euridice. Their missions beyond life initiate them into the post-mortem condition of hastened resignation which is the ideal of neo-classicism, and which is imaged in its statuary - the serene and tranquil divinities described by Winkelmann, or the Pauline Borgheze of Canova whose flesh is sensual but chilled - because statues are the resurrected perfection of human beings, and have been made perfect by the bleeding away of perishable organic life. This is why a romantic hero like Don Giovanni, for whom the proof of reality is bodily sensation, is so imperilled by a statue; but it's the ambition of Gluck's people to stiffen into monuments, and one of the finest images in John Copley's production at Covent Garden poses Janet Baker, defiantly invoking the ministers of death, on a plinth over the prompt box which is lined up with the massive idol of Apollo behind her, whose solemn marble imperitability she will, once she has died, come to share.



"Leda and the Swan", from an exhibition of works on paper by Duncan Grant at the Anthony d'Offay Gallery.

Calf love

By Eric Korn

84 Charing Cross Road
Ambassadors Theatre

There are, it must be clearly stated, excellent second-hand bookshops in New York City. So it was not need but sentiment that drove Helen Hanff, journeyman-scriptwriter by profession but bibliophile by avocation, to write from her cold brownstone apartment in the upper fifties or wherever, to the now-long-defunct bookshop of Marks and Co in the Charing Cross Road, with her wants of Hazlitt and Johnson and Lander and De Quincey: "England seems a lot nearer than 17th St."

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Dream of Gerontius or *Das Lied von der Erde* doesn't belong to an individual but exults or implores on behalf of the whole human race; likewise the tragic courage of Alceste - and the quality which makes her neoclassically statuesque - is her capacity to resist the persuasion of personal emotion and to renounce Admetus in order to save him. Even with transpositions, Gluck's writing tests and tries Janet Baker's voice, but she has the rare art of justifying vocal uncertainty as dramatic distress. You never think the singer has been overparted; rather it's the character who has been urged beyond emotional endurance.

The production mounted for her is a nice demonstration of the relativity of neoclassicism, or the variety of neoclassicisms. Each age has its own version of the past, but Roger Butlin's sets compound and collate the different versions: some of the choruses, masked and ranked in tiers, belong to the Greek tragic amphitheatre, but others are garbed in the flimsy Grecian cocktail dresses favoured by Alma-Tadema; Admetus's palace is a cool museum courted like the room containing the Elgin marbles, but its imposition of order doesn't extend far, and where the classical world ends the romantic one murky and sublimely begins - at the perimeter of this safe colonized region is the underworld Alceste confronts, a rather nothingness of withered trees and drifting fogs.

The problem with *Alceste*, which the Covent Garden production has mitigated but not altogether avoided, is that the work doesn't remain true to its own neoclassical logic. Instead of freezing the heroine into a statue, mortifying life and thus transcending it as neoclassical marble does, it permits a bolsterous Hercules to rout the Furies and restores her to Admetus, commissioning a flippant ballet (since the French version of the score is being used) to celebrate this trivialized reconciliation. Until this happens, John Copley's production is redolent and stately symmetrical; but the late into comedy permits him to trot out some of those kitschy scenic tricks and decorative trinkets for which he's famous - crowns of gold plastic for Alceste and Admetus to wear to the ballet, and an apotheosis for Apollo which looks like a Selridge's Christmas tableau gone incongruously Greek.

Were the English ever as class-ridden, smug, as ignorant of their own history, as ignorant of their own literature, as ignorant of their own language, as ignorant of their own culture, as ignorant of their own art, as ignorant of their own science, as ignorant of their own religion, as ignorant of their own philosophy, as ignorant of their own history, as ignorant of their own literature, as ignorant of their own language, as ignorant of their own culture, as ignorant of their own art, as ignorant of their own science, as ignorant of their own religion, as ignorant of their own philosophy, as ignorant of their own history, as ignorant of their own literature, as ignorant of their own language, as ignorant of their own culture, as ignorant of their own art, as ignorant of their own science, as ignorant of their own religion, as ignorant of their own philosophy, as ignorant of their own history, as ignorant of their own literature, as ignorant of their own language, as ignorant of their 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All-weather artist

By Christopher White

Jacob van Ruisdael
Mauritshuis, The Hague

To celebrate the third centenary of Jacob van Ruisdael's death, a major exhibition has been arranged by the Mauritshuis in The Hague, where it can be seen until April 11. It will be on show at the Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

It is accompanied by two publications, a generously illustrated scholarly catalogue by Seymour Slive and an album of excellent illustrations. The exhibition establishes not only Ruisdael's stature as one of the leading Dutch landscape artists in his own century, but also, at least to the English visitor, his impact on landscape painting in Britain in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In their different ways Gainsborough, Constable, Turner and a number of lesser artists particularly from the Norwich school were indebted to his example, whether in mood, subject or form, and it is appropriate that a panel at the beginning of the exhibition should be devoted to Ruisdael's touching tribute to Constable's art: "It haunts my mind and clings to my heart".

Seymour Slive points out that if the sale of postcards is an accurate guide to public taste, after Rembrandt's "Night Watch" and Vermeer's "View of Delft", Ruisdael's "Windmill at Wijk" is the most popular picture in the Dutch museums. It is probably true that in the popular mind Ruisdael's art is generally associated with windmills, but what a limited view this represents is strikingly demonstrated by the exhibition's range and diversity. Ruisdael may confine himself to landscape, but within that broad category he explores every type of subject and, more significantly, expresses it within a variety of mood from the sunny and serene to the tempestuous and disturbed. It is this sense of an artist consistently communicating through an imaginative arrangement of nature, unconfined by any restraints of topographical accuracy which absorbs the spectator.

Ruisdael worked in a variety of media. Although primarily a painter he was also an active draughtsman, who produced a by no means negligible group of etchings. Large-scale canvases alternate with little pictures, which often convey as much or more. His subject matter includes, dunes, beaches, seascapes, water-mills, waterfalls, mountains, town views, cornfields, castles, woody pools and particularly trees. Sometimes he paints "close-ups", at other times panoramas. Different lights at different seasons of the year are all part of his repertoire. The snowy winter scene or the seascapes may occur rarely, but when they do their effect is keenly felt.

Within each picture there are usually a number of subsidiary motifs, which offer centres of interest throughout the composition. As one examines the length and breadth of Ruisdael's landscapes - and the breadth is equally important since the elements, whether sun, clouds or wind tend to operate across the canvas - the eye is delighted by details, such as the church on a hill, or linear laid out on the bleaching fields. The depth of his pictures is most skilfully graded, so that not only does he achieve continuity, but in contrast to many other Dutch painters, whether of his uncle Salomon van Ruisdael's generation, such as Jan van Goyen, or his own contemporaries, for example Adriaen and the younger Willem van de Velde, he introduces much more incident between foreground and background.

Ruisdael is also a superb manipulator of the paint brush. One watches him coming to grips with painting the varying textures and substances of the natural world. Sometimes it comes effortlessly, as in his handling of the crumbling bark on a tree or reeds beside a pond. Other substances such as water required more sustained effort; in an early sea-piece the waves lack texture, whereas in the "Rough Sea" from Boston there is an incomparably vivid and chilling representation of spray from the choppy waves whipped up by the wind. The mill race provides greater problems to transform what in earlier works looks more like cotton wool to a convincing portrayal of tumbling rushing water. He can paint grandly, as in the numerous studies of broadly executed cuddling clouds, which so frequently represent half of the area of his pictures. (It is an unfortunate result of his technique that time has dealt much more harshly with his skies than his *terra firma*.) Or he can paint like the most refined miniaturist in his rendering of tiles in a pond or farm buildings or brick walls. Compared with Ruisdael, Hobbema is summary in his execution of buildings, whereas on the contrary Jan van der Heyden appears pernickety, so that the momentum of painting is lost.

But for all that this rewarding exhibition shows and tells us, it cannot but leave a number of unanswered and perhaps unanswerable questions. An apparently adequate figure painter in his youth, why did he later invite the intervention of other artists, such as Adriaen van de Velde, and Nicolaes Berchem, sometimes to the picture's detriment? Given the almost total absence of working sketches in his existing oeuvre, what, if any, was the role of drawing in the creation of his pictures? Now, if in all, is the spectator to read specific symbols or allegories in Ruisdael's landscapes? Unfortunately, neither the artist nor any of his contemporaries has left unequivocal evidence to enlighten us about these varied matters. The main clues must remain in the works themselves, and to these we can happily return.

Square holes and golf clubs

By Frances Spalding

British Sculpture
Whitechapel Gallery

With the agility of a magician, post-war sculpture has frequently changed its act. Nor has it ignored that trick which never fails to win applause - vanishing. Part 2 of the Whitechapel Art Gallery's survey of twentieth-century British sculpture is necessarily confusing because during this period sculpture became unmoored. It took on synthetic colour and adopted minimal extremes. It acknowledged technology and incorporated movement and light. It discovered ideas and forgot about materials and then rediscovered materials and forgot ideas. For a brief period it became what sculpture is traditionally not: a photograph, a walk through a landscape or a pile of 5,800 oranges gradually depleted over two weeks to nil. It became a square hole cut into a field and lined with turf and mirror so that the hole itself, like the conjuror's egg, disappears.

The vanishing hole cannot be lightly dismissed. Until that moment in 1968 when Keith Arnatt, for the purposes of the photograph shown here, made the invisible hole visible by placing his shadow over it, the hole had occupied a strategic position in British sculpture. Its original authorship had been contested, its role so earnestly discussed that it had become the subject of *Punch* cartoons. Patrick Caulfield, searching for a cliché for the painting shown here, "Sculpture in a Landscape", seized on a Hepworth which mounts two framed holes one on top of the other. Once the focus had become the point where sculpture ceases to exist, a precedent had been set for the further dematerialization of sculpture into land art, conceptual art and performance. In order to make the invisible, sculpture itself had first to disappear.

Many, therefore, will find this jargon-pedant show an anorectic experience. The more cerebral sculpture becomes, the more it is absent in physical terms, until, as with Tim Hind's installation, it becomes illusionism, an image of a staircase proceeding confusingly onto the staircase wall. The show charts sculpture's post-war progress but does not explain it. For reasons of space it represents artists at their most dilapidated and makes no attempt to trace careers. It therefore gives little sense of what the younger sculptors were reacting against. Moore and Hepworth, though weighty in reputation during this period, are slightly misrepresented. Nor does the show's industrial sculpture of the New Generation artists emerge with an impact equivalent to what it created in the 1960s.

By the late 1960s, disenchantment had set in. Moore's monumental bronzes were suspected of theft; those artists who looked instead to Anthony Caro's steel-girder poetry

found their large-scale work difficult to sell and to store. Alternatives were found in the humorous and lightweight. Rounding a corner in this show one encounters Barry Flanagan's "asing, i guias". In which wobbly shapes made out of stuffed material mock the rigidity of steel. Further on, Bruce McLean is photographed in the pose of Moore's "Fallen Warrior", found earlier in the show. In "Plinth Work" McLean adopts various poses on the theme of the reclining figure, contorting himself across the kind of pedestals used to lift sculpture off the floor and transpose it into the realm of art.

By 1970, sculpture had been deposed and the artist enthroned. Gilbert and George posed with gilded hands and faces as "living sculptures". Richard Long made his knapsack and booted presence in landscape the subject of his art. The map and photograph exhibited here celebrate a hundred mile walk that lasted seven days. Sculpture had extended its dimensions to include a field and lined with turf and mirror so that the hole itself, like the conjuror's egg, disappears. "Spent" sucking needles from grass stems. Traditionally substantial, sculpture was now made to be impermanent. A photograph records the room John Hilliard hung with paper balls on lavillable thread. Near by on a glass shelf at David Tremlett's eighty-one cassettes recording spring noises in different counties. Anything that involved more than two dimensions could now become sculpture, even if its presentation in the gallery was confined to a photograph. McLean's "Floataway Piece" is about leaves passing down river at Barnes.

Among this week's contributors

JOHN BATCHELOR is a Fellow of New College, Oxford.

JOHN BAVLEY is Warton Professor of English at Oxford. His *Skinscape and Tragedy* was published earlier this year.

JACQUES BERQUE's books include *The Arabs*, 1969, and *Egypt: Imperialism and Business*, 1972.

ALAN BOLO is writing a critical study of Hugh MacDiarmid.

BRUCE BOUCHER is a lecturer in the History of Art at University College London.

OM BRACK is Professor of English and Bibliography at Arizona State University.

RICHARD BROWN is co-editor of the *James Joyce Broadsheet*.

ROBERT BROWNING is Professor Emeritus of Classics at Birkbeck College, London. His *The Byzantine Empire* was published last year.

ROBIN BURS is a lecturer in French at Woolwich College of Further Education.

A. S. BYATT's latest novel is *The Virgin in the Garden*, 1978.

OLIVIER CAVALIERO is a lecturer in English at the University of Cambridge.

PATRICK COLLINSON is Professor of History at the University of Kent. His most recent book is *Archbishop Grindal 1519-1583: the Struggle for a Reformed Church*, 1979.

ROBERT CONQUEST's recent books include *Kolyma: the Arctic Death Camps*, 1978, and *Forays*, 1979.

PETER CONRAD's books include *Romantic Opera and Literary Form*.

ANTHONY CONRAN's collections of poems include *Poems 1951-67*, 1974.

ADIAN DAV is a lecturer in English at the University of Hull.

PAUL DRIVER is writing a book on Peter Maxwell Davies.

PETER EARLE's *The World of Defoe* was published in 1977. His latest book, *The Sack of Panama*, will be reviewed in next week's TLS.

Immaterial concepts offered relief after material excess. But a decade on, the ideas presented often seem tenuous. From the Tate's collection come extremes of intellectual rigour such as Michael Craig-Martin's literal realization of "4 identical boxes with their lids reversed". More recently, a reaction against mandarin taste has brought a return to vernacular traditions. But the last decade is the least well represented in this show. The selection looks arbitrary and is confusing, the thematic headings being too vague to offer useful guidelines. It is full of British Council and Arts Council favourites and empty of women, though women sculptors working in various media have made a distinctive contribution in recent years.

The exhibition begins and ends with a reference to war. It has been argued that the sense of menace in the spiky, constructed metal sculpture produced in the Cold War period lay more in the mind of the spectator than in the sculpture itself. But this opening section does strike a macabre note, mixed with nervous elegance as in Lynn Chadwick's "Dragonfly" which hangs from the ceiling. A sense of horror clings also to Bernard Meadows's crucifix and Elizabeth Frink's dead or wingless birds, and to Michael Sande's "Minister for Propaganda", a gas-masked Mickey Mouse, found at the end of the show. But the artist who deals most poignantly with his experience of war is George Fullard. His "Infant St George", collapsed out of found pieces of wood, a golf-club becoming the child's foot, is both exuberant and memorable, its poetry a strange amalgam of wit and terror.

RAANAN GILSON is editor of the *Journal of Medical Ethics* and a student health physician at Imperial College, London.

NORMAN HAMPTON's books include *The Life and Opinions of Maximilian Robespierre*, 1975.

PETER KEMP's critical study *H. G. Wells and the Cuckooing Age* will be published next spring.

ERIC KORN is an antiquarian book-seller in London.

GRAVEL LINDO's *The Ophion-Eater*, a biography of De Quincey, was published earlier this year.

JOHN MCMANNERS is Regius Professor of Ecclesiastical History at the University of Oxford. His *Death and Enlightenment* was published last month.

OSWYN MURRAY is a Fellow of Balliol College, Oxford. He is the author of *Early Greece*, 1980.

DAVID NOXON is a lecturer in English at King's College, London.

GEORGE PARFITT is the author of *Ben Jonson: Public Poet and Private Man*, 1976.

STEPHEN PLAICHE's latest translation, with his brother Neville, is of Turgenev's *Merlin*.

ALAN RYAN teaches Politics at New College, Oxford.

MALCOLM SCHOFIELD is the author of *An Essay On Anaxagoras*, 1980.

A. W. B. SIMPSON is Professor of Law at the University of Kent.

EUEN WEBER is Dean of the College of Letters and Science in the University of California, Los Angeles.

CHRISTOPHER WHITE's *The Dutch Queen* will be published next year.

M. E. YAP's most recent book is *Strategies of British India: Iran and Afghanistan 1798-1839*, 1980.

to the editor

Andrei
Voznesensky

Sir, - Carol Rumens's article (Commentary, November 27) on Andrei Voznesensky's reading at the Round House contains a number of factual and textual errors, and some strangely impertinent jibes to boot. May I cite just four examples?

Her first alleged quotation from the man's actual verse claims that "Sometimes he gets hooked on an 'insight' that becomes tedious on repetition: 'Man does not live by sky alone', for example". The poem this pretends to come from, "Chagall's Cornflowers", is clearly printed in *Nesimlja for the Present*, and the *leimnif-cum-rein* clearly reads (and was read loud and clear by Edward Fox at Chalk Farm), "Man Lives by Sky Alone" - "Lives", not "does not live"; the tedium is in the ear of your reporter.

She concedes that Voznesensky is "impressive . . . as a performer" and yet she approached this Round House session as though it were some ghastly exam, and elicits at the beginning of her article from "some remark I couldn't quite catch" - something about our being a "cool country" - a sneaking suspicion that he'd decided to fail us. Is your paper really more interested in its correspondents' brandishing their inferior complex, than in their doing the requisite homework? It was perfectly obvious to me that, in thanking us for his deservedly enthusiastic first round of applause with "I had thought . . . you are cool country", Voznesensky was reflecting on the famous British reserve and congratulating us for overcoming it. Your commentator decided not to, with the mysteriously xenophobic observation that "We British like to be amused, and we are not going to let a Russian poet stand in our way". What a pity she didn't let the Russian poet, or its translations, stand in the way of her misreadings of it. Perhaps she turns the Chagall poem's coda on its head because, again, the author had bothered to inform us that in Russian "nebom" "by sky" or more likely "by heaven" he said, rhyming with "klobom" ("by bread") indicating a tacit invocation of the biblical saying, "Man lives by sky alone when his spirit soars to transcend national boundaries and iron curtains, as in the paintings of Chagall, whose display and reproduction are still more or less banned in the Soviet Union.

Rumens misrepresents, again, with her straggled conviction that "To the authorities [Voznesensky] is the just about acceptable face of rebellion . . . he is not a political animal". The fact is that he has suffered virtually non-stop harassment and attempted suppression of his private writing and public reading career ever since it began in 1958. His uncompromisingly libertarian play *Save Your Face*, which cries out for the freedom of the individual personality - "the who would save his face shall lose it" (cf. Nixon et al) - was stopped and withdrawn after a highly successful opening at Moscow's leading avant-garde theatre, the Taganka; in the early 1970s Rumens's deductions about Voznesensky's acceptability to officialdom inside Russia seem based on third-party hearsay. The poet's peers - dissidents, exiles and native Soviet allies - tell me that the reason he manages to stay ahead of his enemies is embedded in his worldwide appeal, combining the grass-roots populism of Allen Ginsberg with the classical charms of Nureyev.

Rumens's closing proposition is typical of her unimaginative stance: "A licensed exporter of the Russian soul or some such cultural commodity". Voznesensky does not, nearly match the range and brilliance of a poet like Brodsky.

Rumens is inevitably better informed, however, inwardly, with the (self) translated works of Brodsky, and with his situation: past and present, than with those of Voznesensky, how readily predictable that

she promptly crowns the former the better poet. It's understandable, if not commendable: her false logic is neither. If Voznesensky could indeed be proven the less brilliant writer, it wouldn't be because he's an exporter, any more than Brodsky would be more so by dint of being the reverse - eg, an antagonist of the softness of the Soviet state or the selfishness of the security service (which, ironically, Voznesensky himself so often turns out to be).

As Brodsky addresses his verse most deliberately, almost exclusively, to intellectuals, whereas Voznesensky is simultaneously the Russian equivalent of a perennially chattering folk or pop-songwriter/singer, it was on the cards that any comparison to be made between the two would come out looking edious.

MICHAEL HOROVITZ,
New Departures, Piedmont, Bidey,
Stroud, Glas GL6 7BU.

Stevie Smith

Sir, - It was with pleasure that Jack Barbera and I read John Bayley's discerning and enthusiastic review of the book we edited, *Mr. Agony: Uncollected Writings of Stevie Smith* (November 6). We are especially gratified that Professor Bayley found our introduction "admirable", though we are slightly embarrassed by the extent of his praise - "In itself a wholly adequate substitute for any biography". Having been at work on a biography of Stevie Smith since 1978, we are only too aware of how inadequate our introduction would be were it to pass as a substitute for a critical biography. We should like to assure hundreds of people who have entrusted us with recollections and with letters from Stevie that we are indeed still at work on our biography. We want also to invite any friends or associates of Stevie Smith with whom we've not been in touch to write to us so that our account of Stevie's life and work may finally be as accurate and revealing as possible. There is no doubt that, when fully presented, the Polish king Wladyslaw Jagiello - or even of Rurik, first Norman duke of Novgorod, held to be first ruler of future Russia, from whom the immediate predecessor of Cardinal Sapieha, Cardinal Duke Puzyna was descended. The original title of those books was "knlaz".

WILLIAM McBRIEN,
181-11 Kildare Road, Jamaica,
New York 11432.

'The Forgotten Colony'

Sir, - The accusations of "muddling accounts" and of weighing down narrative with wrong detail that are made against Andrew Graham Yool's *The Forgotten Colony* by Nicholas Shakespeare (November 20) could be equally directed to his review. No region around Mendoza was ever named Nueva Inglaterra to celebrate Philip's marriage to Mary Tudor. The city of Mendoza itself did not come into existence until 1561, and by then the news of Mary's death in 1558 had reached even the Captaincy-General of Chile. When its governor, Garcia de Mendoza, sent out an expedition across the Andes to found the settlement that bears his name, there was no longer a union of crowns to celebrate, and very appropriately, he had himself honoured instead.

Shakespeare is probably thinking of the expeditions that left Chile three years earlier, and went to the Kingdom of Poland; and only Poland can make the Archbishop of Cracow abandon it. The Republic of Poland, as it was constituted in 1918, did not acknowledge titles; but would never have questioned the use of that of the Archbishop of Cracow. The Polish People's Republic has taken no interest in it.

(4) St Boncompagni is mistaken in assuming that Minskewy, Rollicher and Fernan were the "three archbishops" of Wroclaw (Breslau). The Archbishop of Wroclaw (Breslau) in Poland carries the title of Prince of Nysa (Nes) and of Warmia. (Bismarck) re-

Unlike the city after which it was named, the Andean Londres has not changed much in the past three hundred years. It has remained a small and sleepy village of a few hundred inhabitants, one-floor adobe houses with thatched roofs and a few, unpaved streets. At least so it was when I saw it briefly in 1964. But it has the great distinction of being one of the earliest settlements in present-day Argentina - according to some accounts the fifth oldest - and, as such, it appears in every local history book. Its name, only known as Londres, puzzles the student and traveller alike. One theory as to its origins that I remember hearing as a child in Buenos Aires, was that Zurita, in all probability a reader of Spanish chivalry romances, had come across the euphonic Londres much in the same way as other readers-cum-explorers came across the names of California and Patagonia. This seems all the more plausible since things English played such an important part in Spanish chivalry books and, however ignorant of Arthurian influences, we had all at least heard of *Palmerin de Inglaterra*. The true reason la of course mere pedestrian, yet the subsequent history of the Spanish and English crowns has cast, retrospectively, an even more fanciful light on the ambitions that fostered the founding of Londres da la Nueva Inglaterra, than any romance of chivalry might have done.

DANIEL WATTSBEIN,
46 Leckford Road, Oxford OX2 6HY.

'The Uses of Obscurity'

Sir, - I am sorry about A. H. White's distress (Letters, November 20), which seems to have blinded him to what my review (November 13) actually said. It did not, as he complains, attack all six books discussed: one was praised unreservedly; another, largely so. It did not rest its charge of obscurantism on the quoting of "a difficult Garman word" which it "misspells" (ie, an unlamented omission, for which I am sorry); a whole list of misty technicalities was cited. Nor did I put forward the bizarre interpretation of *The Golden Bowl* which White's letter attempts to foist on to me. I argued that a specific passage in the novel does not mean what he says it does. His inability to distinguish between comment on a particular poet and an overall interpretation is further evidence of the critical tendency remarked on in my review.

Princes, Dukes and Cardinals

Sir, - Ludovico M. Bencompagni's comments on Cardinal Sapieha (Letters, November 20) call for substantial correction on several points.

(1) To call Lithuanian dukes "princes" is quite incorrect. They were guardians of the frontiers, usually descendants of Lithuanian and Gedymin, whose grandson was the Polish king Wladyslaw Jagiello - or even of Rurik, first Norman duke of Novgorod, held to be first ruler of future Russia, from whom the immediate predecessor of Cardinal Sapieha, Cardinal Duke Puzyna was descended. The original title of those books was "knlaz".

(2) Hence "Duke Sapieha". He was not Prince-Bishop, and then Prince-Archbishop of Cracow in virtue of an Imperial decision of Francis Joseph I of 1889. If that were correct, it would be the second princely title attached to the bishops of Cracow, and of no particular significance. The bishops of Cracow had been territorial princes of Siewierz (Severin), a Silesian principedom, since 1446, when Zbigniew Cardinal Oleśnicki acquired it for himself and his apostolic successors. Politically the principedom was attached to the *voivodship* (province) of Cracow, while remaining an independent unit of the Kingdom of Poland (with which Lithuania, comprising all Byelorussian and Ukrainian lands, was incorporated).

It follows that Karol Cardinal Wojtyla was Prince of Siewierz before he was elected Pope John Paul II.

(3) It is immaterial that this title was abolished by Pope Pius XII, or its use discontinued by him, since it was not a Papal title, but one of the Kingdom of Poland; and only Poland can make the Archbishop of Cracow abandon it. The Republic of Poland, as it was constituted in 1918, did not acknowledge titles; but would never have questioned the use of that of the Archbishop of Cracow. The Polish People's Republic has taken no interest in it.

(4) St Boncompagni is mistaken in assuming that Minskewy, Rollicher and Fernan were the "three archbishops" of Wroclaw (Breslau). The Archbishop of Wroclaw (Breslau) in Poland carries the title of Prince of Nysa (Nes) and of Warmia. (Bismarck) re-

There, the fiancée is said to have "the delicate shade of truthfulness" upon her features; she displays "a mature capacity for fidelity"; her glance is "guileless, profound, confident, and trustful"; her forehead is "illuminated by the unextinguishable light of belief and love". If this constitutes an affinity with the powers of darkness in White's eyes, his way of seeing things must have been sadly impaired by the "112 different" interpretations of *Heart of Darkness*; his book assures us he has "looked at".

PETER KEMP.

61 Princes Avenue, Finchley, London N3.

Naming Owls

Sir, - In answer to Philip Thody's question, in his review of Hervé Bazin's *L'Eglise visie* (November 20): no, I didn't know that "un scope" was a "dwarf owl", and I still don't. There is no European owl bearing the designation "dwarf", though there are three species characterized by their smallness. They are (1) the Little Owl, (2) the Pygmy Owl, and (3) the Scops Owl.

Now if by "dwarf owl" we are to understand either (1) or (2), then the implication is that the French have wickedly or negligently thrown a spanner in the works of lawful taxonomy by pinching the name of the third species to describe one of the other two. If, on the other hand, Mr Thody wants us to know that the French call a Scops Owl "un scope", I find I can take the news quite calmly.

Incidentally, does Mr Thody, or anyone, know what the English call the *hibou petit-die*?

ROGER W. JONES.

Bryn Clettwr, Pontshen, Llan-dysul, Dyfed.

The United Irishmen

Sir, - Joseph O'Brien's letter of September 18 has only now been shown to me. The figure I quoted as to membership of the United Irishmen in Carlisle in 1798, however improbable they may seem to Mr O'Brien, are those revealed in the latest research on that place and time. *Quod scripsi* them: the statistics stand even if he be shocked at the extent of the politicization they indicate.

PÁDRAIG Ó SNODAIGH,
Irish History Workshop Journal,
127 Bóthar na Trá, Sandymount,
Dublin 4.

Joint Winner of the Wolfson Literary Award for History, 1981

A Liberal Descent

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J. W. BURROW

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Experiences of harmony

By Bruce Boucher

JOHN McANDREW:
Venetian Architecture of the Early Renaissance
599pp. MIT Press. £24.80
0 282 13157 9

DEBORAH HOWARD:
The Architectural History of Venice
263pp. Batsford. £15.
0 8419 0681 5

The publication of two new books on Venetian architecture is a welcome event, especially with authors of the calibre of the late John McAndrew and Deborah Howard. Both are well known for scholarly studies in the field, McAndrew as the catalogue of the drawings of the eighteenth-century architect and theoretician Antonio Venturi, and Miss Howard as the author of a book on the architecture of Jacopo Sansovino. By turning to a more general survey of Venetian architecture, each author has drawn upon a wide range of specialized material, much of it not available in English, and each has produced a "first" of a sort: McAndrew's *Venetian Architecture of the Early Renaissance* is the first extended account of the subject since the 1890s, and Miss Howard's *The Architectural History of Venice* is the first book in English which takes the story of Venetian buildings down to the present day. While neither book is exclusively addressed to an academic audience, they both require a degree of familiarity with their subjects and with architectural history in general; the very detailed nature of McAndrew's book will ensure it is carefully read by anyone with a particular interest in its subject, while Miss Howard's account offers just the sort of introduction that an undergraduate or intelligent reader would find helpful.

Reading the two books in tandem, one finds they agree, generally, on those areas in which they overlap but the contrast in style and method is striking. It is not entirely a question of Miss Howard's having to compress into thirty-five pages what McAndrew has barely contained within six hundred; rather, the difference seems, if not exactly of generations, then certainly one of temperament and intellectual orientation. Like many younger architectural historians, Miss Howard tends to eschew discussions of the appearance and feel of buildings in favour of a factually based account of architecture, often with reference to its economic and historical context. McAndrew's approach is very much the opposite. His roots are firmly in the Ruskinian tradition of working towards the general from a careful analysis of the particular, and this approach informed the whole of his vast undertaking.

McAndrew's account of the origin of his project is characteristic of the bias of his book. One summer, while sitting in the Caffè Florian, the author overheard two German professors lamenting the absence of a Gothic work on post-Gothic architecture in Venice; they deemed such a project hopeless because of the lack of good photographs of the buildings. Naturally enough, McAndrew rebelled at the thought of such an "imaginary obstacle" and at the tendency of some architectural historians to work from photographs rather than from the buildings themselves. So he decided to prove that one could produce a study of the first phase of Venetian Renaissance architecture by working directly from the buildings themselves; consequently, McAndrew spent several summers looking at buildings in Venice and recording his impressions of them. More specifically, his purpose was to chronicle the changes in style which occurred in Venetian architecture between 1460 and the 1520s, roughly from the first transitional work to the beginnings of the High Renaissance. As his roots were more upon the vocabulary of Venetian architecture, his book takes the form of thirty-three chapters,

mainly given over to extended analysis of individual buildings or related groups of buildings. The chapters are, in turn, grouped under four main headings: the first Renaissance work and the career of Antonio Rizzo; the works of Pietro Lombardo and works close to his style; the career of Mauro Codussi, probably the most important architect of the period; and the post-Codussian architecture of the first two decades of the sixteenth century.

Venetian Architecture of the Early Renaissance is unlike most books on architecture, and it is also a work which its author did not live to complete. Hence, it resists an easy assessment. Whether the author would have made significant additions or deletions is impossible to say, but the book might have been filled from a greater degree of synthesis, either by reshaping existing chapters or by including chapters which brought the strands of the text together. As it stands, the book's virtues and vices are those peculiar to its empirical schema. It is at its best in the analysis of individual buildings but less good on integrating this information into a broader pattern. To take the positive side first, the author's meticulous approach pays dividends in terms of many acute observations. Thus he draws attention to a rarely noted feature of Rizzo's ceremonial staircase in the Doge's Palace, the *scala dei giganti*; the staircase veers slightly from left to right so that it can link the arcades of the palace and the entrance of the Arco Foscari, neither of which are, in fact, aligned. McAndrew also draws our attention to the clever use of a fragmentary order of Ionic pilasters along the base of the canal side of Santa Maria del Miracoli, a touch which gives the illusion of another floor of the building below the water. The extended essays on Rizzo's work in the Doge's Palace, on the design of Santa Maria del Miracoli, and on Codussi's Santa Maria Formosa are especially memorable examples of the author's ability to read the evidence of buildings and to write about it with clarity and wit.

The hero of the book is Mauro Codussi, the Borgomast architect who practised in Venice from 1468 until his death in 1504. Little is known of Codussi before he burst upon the scene with the commission to rebuild San Michele in Isola, but he appears to have had a first-hand knowledge of Alberti's work and possibly Brunelleschi's as well. Like Palladio half a century later, Codussi had tremendous gifts and the good fortune to receive commissions commensurate with his talent. Particularly in the field of ecclesiastical architecture, his redeployment of the old Byzantine quincunx or grid-like sequence of squares and rectangles enabled Codussi to reconcile traditional Venetian building types with Albertian theories of order and clarity. To step inside Codussi's buildings is to experience harmony and technical on a level not seen again in Venetian architecture before Palladio. Buildings like San Giovanni Crisostomo and Santa Maria Formosa bring to mind Palladio's observations on architectural harmony; churches he wrote in the fourth book of the *Quattro Libri*, should be constructed "in such a manner and with such proportions, that all the parts together may convey a pleasing harmony to the eyes of the spectators". As a whole, Codussi's architecture forms a more coherent entity and seems more progressive in its adaptation of Central Italian patterns than does the generality of contemporary Venetian architecture. So it is not surprising that McAndrew has been so successful in bringing his life to life. His most problematic figures of Antonio Rizzo and Pietro Lombardo.

The chapters on architecture after Codussi's death will also be well received by students of the period. The first two decades of the sixteenth century are among the least studied or understood periods in the whole of Venetian architecture; yet it was

a period of crucial importance, as it witnessed the first stages in the transformation of St Mark's Square and the beginnings of several major structures, like the Fondaco del Tedesco, San Salvatore, and the Scuola di San Rocco. The merit of the author's work in this section is to provide a detailed account of such buildings and of architects like Tullio Lombardo, son of Pietro and better known as a sculptor, Giovanni Buora, and Bartolomeo Bon, the predecessor of Sansovino as architect to the Procurators of St Mark's. This reconstruction of Tullio Lombardo's architectural career is particularly welcome, although McAndrew gives him less credit than he probably deserves for the elevation of San Salvatore.

Certainly, there is much to praise in *Venetian Architecture of the Early Renaissance*, and it will serve as a medium for revealing the pleasures of an important phase of architecture to a wider public. But it must be said that the book falls short of its ambitious goal. Some limitations, as noted above, stem from the structure of the text, while others are inherent in our present, limited understanding of the period itself. The author's approach shifts uneasily from chapters constructed around a theme (altars or chapels, for example), to ones on single buildings, and to others on architects. It is a system which militates against a coherent picture, and fragmentation is also enhanced by the decision to treat the major works of Codussi or Lombardo in a sequence of discrete essays, thereby minimizing continuity and development. The very detailed accounts of the buildings also leads, on occasion, to a certain myopia. The facade of the Scuola di San Marco is analysed in isolation from the adjacent facade of the church of SS Giovanni e Paolo, with its similar system of blind arcades and an imposing portal of the transitional period from Gothic to Renaissance. When viewed together, one cannot escape the feeling that the designers of the Scuola's facade intended it to be an answer to that of the church. The history of rivalry between churches and confraternities, as well as among confraternities, would lend colour to such an explanation for the imposing facade of the Scuola di San Marco. Here, too, the narrow focus of the book precludes reference to the architectural drawings of Jacopo Bellini or to later buildings like the chapel of St Anthony in Padua, although works like these make the facade of the Scuola di San Marco more comprehensible. The chapter on Santa Maria Formosa is similarly full of interesting observations but does not tell the reader why the church faces away from the campo. In general, more space could have been allotted to topics like patronage, the nature of Venice, and building materials and methods.

One puts down McAndrew's book with the feeling that his efforts may have been somewhat premature. Since Paolotti's monumental *L'Architettura e la cultura del rinascimento in Venezia* of 1893, the general state of knowledge concerning fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century Venetian architecture has advanced very slowly. Paolotti first identified Mauro Codussi and discovered numerous documents which have yet to be digested by later scholars. Paolotti's volumes still offer the most detailed account of that period, not only because of his comprehensive familiarity with the documents, but also because he had a Ruskinian eye for detail. Both are needed to make sense of Venetian architecture. Since Paolotti's day, much of the most rewarding work on Venetian architecture has been done by concentration upon individual buildings or on aspects of the building trade. These studies have told us a great deal, but they have not brought us to the stage at which a work on the scale of McAndrew's could be wholly feasible. There are simply too many missing names, missing dates, and a heterogeneity of styles that make a coherent picture of Venetian architecture, yet it was

If McAndrew's book may not have achieved its primary objective, it is, nonetheless, a positive contribution towards an understanding of Venetian Renaissance architecture. Under one cover, it furnishes a wide range of information and observations, and the text is accompanied by over four hundred photographs, which have been chosen with great discernment. With these virtues, *Venetian Architecture of the Early Renaissance* will remain a valuable reference work for many years to come.

Passing from John McAndrew's book to Deborah Howard's is like stepping out of a gondola and into a vaporetto. *The Architectural History of Venice* moves through thirteen centuries at a rapid clip and fills each page with a remarkable amount of information. Occasionally, one may wish for fewer facts and more colour, but Miss Howard's book is the best concise introduction to Venetian architecture in English. At the outset, the author states that her book will concentrate on "the finest, most influential buildings, those which, most of all, reward one's attention with their subtlety and inventiveness, and offer the most lasting satisfaction"; the book avoids "what one might be tempted to call the typical buildings of each age, for these are, by definition, distinguished by their ordinariness". This may well be the right criterion to apply in a short book, although it seems a pity that more space could not have been given to the least monumentally imposing side of Venetian architecture, an aspect which has been brilliantly exploited by Italian authors like Elio Tincanato and Antonio Salvadori.

Two chapters of *The Architectural History of Venice* will commend themselves to those wishing to know why Venetian architecture is so different: that on the medieval city and the companion one on Gothic. These one finds a clear account of the modes of water and pedestrian traffic, the standard building materials, and the explanation of the structure of Venetian palaces, churches and scuole. This is just the sort of information that anyone who visits Venice will want to know, and the author puts to good use the com-

ments of visitors like Coryate and Goethe. This part of the book conveys a more vivid sense of the atmosphere of the city than is found in the later, more strictly architectural chapters.

Another aspect of the book that will be gratefully received is the account of architecture since the fall of the Republic in 1797. This has been one aspect of Venetian history and architecture that has aroused great interest in recent years, and Miss Howard has been able to draw upon important studies by Giovanni Romagnoli, Jürgen Jünger, and Aline Zorzi. During the nineteenth century, Venice was a political football, and much of the destruction and rebuilding had definite political purposes, all of which the author brings out very well. This pages on nineteenth-century architecture srs brief, not only because there has been little built worthy of the city itself, but also because so many questions about its future remain in the air. Miss Howard's view of the changes that have befallen Venice since 1797 is a balanced one; she regrets this orgy of demolition but accepts this necessity of change for survival. It is, however, surprising that she finds Nervi's and Scaroni's Inappropiately named Casa di Risparmio a successful contribution to the Venetian scene, rather than a spectacular example of architectural vandalism!

If *The Architectural History of Venice* lacks anything, it is a bit more of the spirit which imbues John McAndrew's writing. The concentration on facades and ground plans may leave many readers dazed and sometimes tends to give a rather denatured picture of the city. Miss Howard rarely takes us inside buildings, which is a pity with so many unusual and interesting ones from the seventeenth century onwards, like the frescoed *salone* of the Palazzo Zanolio or the splendidly neo-Gothic vestibule of the Danieli hotel. However, these are minor points of disagreement, and the author's account of Venetian architecture is very balanced one. For a more impressionistic view of the city, one should turn back to John McAndrew or, better still, to Marcel Proust and Thomas Mann.

In the beginning

By Martin Robertson

PIERRE AMIET, CHRISTIANE DESROCHES NOBLECOURT, ALAIN PASQUER, FRANÇOISE BARATTE and CATHERINE METZGER:

Art in the Ancient World
A Handbook of Styles and Forms
Translated by Valerie Bynner
567pp. Faber. £20.
0 571 11743 0

In his preface, Jean Hirschen claims this book as "suitable for travellers, scholars, art-lovers and dealers, among others". Of these, scholars will perhaps get least from it, but there is something for them too: as a classicist with only a superficial knowledge of Egyptian art and no great sympathy for it, I myself found the general introduction to the Egyptian section enlightening and inspiring.

The authors are scholars, all curators at the Louvre, explained in the preface, was for each contributor to begin by selecting a representative series of ancient buildings and objects, from which drawings were then made, and to write for these a brief introductory essay or essays. It is not easy to compress such vast fields into an article that is both readable and informative, and they have done it in the main extremely well. The time-span is from the beginning to around the fifth century AD. The book begins with the Middle East, a very short introduction by P. Amiet to the whole area, and then sections on The Iranian World,

Mesopotamia: Sumer, Babylon, Assyria; and The Levant: Syria and Palestine. Next comes Egypt, by C. Desroches Noblecourt; a longer introduction, followed by sections on The Old, Middle and New Kingdom and The Late Period. There follow three undivided chapters: Greece; by A. Pasquier; and F. Baratte and C. Metzger on Etruria and the Etruscans, and on Rome.

Each section has a map, a concise bibliography, and a list of major museums which specialize in the art in question; and there is a glossary at the end. The drawings rarely do everything claimed for them by Noblecourt, but they do convey something of the "styles and forms" and provide a useful body of references. The translation reads well and seems in the main accurate.

A few complaints: Cyprus has virtually fallen out; more should surely have been said of it in the Levantine section. Something seems to have gone wrong in the selection of illustrative Roman material; the coverage of architecture is derisory and of painting non-existent (some mosaics are shown, though the pages are headed "Religious Sculpture"); and one Fayum portrait appears under the heading "Funerary Sculpture". Dates are rather sparse, especially in the Egyptian section. This is something one generally expects in an artificial construct which can mislead. Nevertheless, a grid of centuries and regions, showing the general relation of different segments chronologically in the development, would have added greatly to the book's usefulness. So would an index.

The Benedictine breed

By John McManners

MAARTEN ULTEE:
The Abbey of St. Germain des Prés in the Seventeenth Century
210pp. Yale University Press.
0 300 02562 9

Maarten Ultee is sympathetic — perhaps too much so — towards the Benedictines of St. Maur of the seventeenth century, but such generosity in a historian towards fellow historians is fitting. This was a congregation that prided itself in giving leisure and lavish support to its élite of brilliant historical scholars. Luc d'Achery, Jean Mabillon, Thierry Ruinart, Michel Germain, Bernard de Montfaucon and Claude Martin — these are names synonymous with an immense and relentless erudition which brought forth a host of humanist treasures. Their work centred in the abbey of St. Germain-des-Prés in Paris, which was, as it were, the command post, training depot and transit camp of Benedictine learning in the seventeenth century. Except incidentally, however, Dr Ultee's study is not concerned with the Maurist contribution to learning; indeed, his book ought to have a subtitle limiting its scope: it is "a social and economic history". As such, it bears the impress of the methodology and outlook of the *Annales* school of French historians, as one might guess from the thanks to Dominique Julia and Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie in the preface, and the seven tables and ten graphs listed in the contents (their austerity offset, incidentally, by eleven agreeable illustrations).

In the tradition of the *Annales*, the book begins with a demographic study of the monks of the congregation — nearly 4,000 of them — who took their vows between 1607 and 1690 (as they were moved frequently from house to house, meaningless conclusions cannot be drawn from a single monastery). Their members grew rapidly from 1620 to 1640, and less rapidly to 1670, from which date the overall figure stabilized at around the 2,000 mark up to the

mid-eighteenth century. Years of heavy mortality were swiftly followed by years of numerous professions, which suggests that there were always suitable candidates willing to join and that the superiors were exercising a "conscious control". The available evidence does not seem adequate to make assured detailed generalizations about the geographical and social provenance of novices, but clearly more came from the North than the South, and a majority from "bourgeois" families, especially those of the up-and-coming sort.

Next comes an analysis of the economic basis of the Abbey's life. This is limited to the *mense conventuelle*, the lands, rents and dues held by the monks under their prior, as distinct from the *mense abbatiæ* of the absentee commendatory abbot. As the estates were, for the most part, leased to *fermiers*, the details of management, farming methods, feudal dues and peasant life are not studied. Essentially, we are shown the pattern of revenue and expenditure and the general financial policy of the foundation.

The picture is one of shrewd stewardship which doubled the value of the *mense conventuelle* between 1600 and 1720, and added half a million *livres* worth of new estates to the land register in the course of the seventeenth century. The monastery's credit was so good that it consistently borrowed money below the going rate of interest. Poor abbots of the congregation got similar favourable terms when St. Germain-des-Prés covered them with its guarantee; conversely, in the untoward crises of 1653 and 1690, the other abbots rallied round to borrow money at low rates in the provinces to bail out their Parisian colleagues.

Thanks to their wealth, the monks lived well. Over 14 per cent of their budget went on food, an expenditure per head greater than the wages of an ordinary worker (the calculation, one should note, has not allowed for gussets, who must have been numerous). Since alms to the poor averaged less than 1 per cent of income, the luxurious diet, the sage of sole

and coal brought by special relays from the Atlantic coast verges on scandal. Ultee points out, however, that the monastery quadrupled its almsgiving in starvation years, hovering in do so, and on occasion remitted the debts of its peasants. And if the monks were comfortable, they were regular in the performance of the daily offices, and in fulfilling of the manifold duties arising from the spiritual and temporal jurisdiction they exercised in the Faubourg St Germain (until the archbishop of Paris edged them out of most of their privileges towards the end of the century).

The general reader of this book will probably enjoy most of all the vignettes of individual monks scattered through its pages. There are a few droll characters who fled to new allegiances in matrimony or the Protestant ministry, or were caught and incarcerated for long years in the fortress monastery of Mont St Michel. There are others, more typical, who distinguished themselves as temporal administrators or as pastors. And above all, there is Claude Coton, the only one who left a journal; from its pages, his career and character can be traced in some detail. He did not accept the reform of St Maur, but loved and served the monastery all the same, building up for its profit, and his own, the estate of the barony of Cordoux and eight other farms, then going back to St Germain-des-Prés at the age of sixty-six to die among friends and in the odour of sanctity.

"Religious attitudes and observances," says Dr Ultee, "have always depended on general societal conditions," and he tolerantly chronicles the manifold financial and managerial manoeuvres of a great religious institution in the spirit of this generalization. Examples of cheerful and decent ambivalence between spirituality and worldliness abound in these pages. Perhaps the nicest is the observation of the monks when they decided to allow pedestrians to take a short cut through their cloisters — "to attract more people to our church and to facilitate the retail sale of wool in the monastery".

Prolonged preparations

By Norman Hampson

ROHAN BUTLER:
Chateaul
Volume 1. Father and Son, 1719-1754
1,133pp. Clarendon Press: Oxford
University Press. £48.
0 19 822509 1

In his preface, Rohan Butler assures us briskly that "it is fashionable for lazy readers to criticize long books as self-indulgent." His own is certainly long: by page 1,078 his hero is about to begin his diplomatic career, as French ambassador to Rome. It is not mere laziness that will make potential readers ask themselves whether they are likely to learn more from this book than from four others that they could read in the same time. If one can agree with the author that is is right does not automatically make a book, it does not make it either. The same criteria — accuracy, insight and relevance — for example — apply to both long and short books. What changes is the kind of way in which they manifest themselves.

To some extent, historical "truth" is a question of scale. A chapter on Blamir's career is almost bound to give the impression of a man who knew where he wanted to go and how to get there; ten volumes would produce a very different picture: Butler himself makes a rather similar point. One of the differences between history books and real life is that in the former the sequence of events usually leads up neatly to the lives and the events of their time, and can never quite know what the tomorrow may bring. This is an inescapable difference, in the

sense that no one who begins to write a life of Napoleon can unknow the fact that he was defeated at Waterloo. The leisurely biographer, however, can pretend not to know, he can refuse to impose his own foreshortening, can follow his subject up blind alleys and back down them again, pause to look at the society in which he grew up from which he revolved, examine his taste in art or his laundry bills. Despite all this, he still needs the qualities of the author of the "brief life". Everything must be relevant, though on a different scale; information must cover but in simply because it was there and it seemed a pity to leave it out; it must all add up, even if it makes rather a large sum.

Judged in this way, Butler's *Chateaul* is always magnificent but it is not always war. He is superbly informed about everything: war, diplomacy, estate management, the courts of Europe, religion and the arts. Sometimes, as in his brilliant evocation of the Duchy of Lorraine and the world of Chateaul's childhood, this is history on the grand scale. Sometimes it is merely information that the author has acquired; we might have been spared some of the long accounts of campaigns in which little is known of Chateaul except that he was there. It is not laziness but human frailty that sends the reader running for cover when exposed to fourteen Stalvilles and twenty-six Chateauls. If he was shown less he would see more.

The problem is not merely that one cannot take it all. Carried away by his own enthusiasm, Butler finds it hard not to give us his own survey of Jansenism, the Enlightenment, or whatever happens to be on the agenda. This makes excellent reading in its own right, but it can

impede our understanding of what Chateaul made of it all. His comments on Voltaire's *Siècle de Louis XIV* amount to five not very revealing lines. After five pages of Butler on the same subject, one is not quite sure what Voltaire, what Chateaul and what Butler, for much of the time Butler has not got much to go on and he is in danger of unconsciously padding off on to what Chateaul ought to have felt, without any guarantee that he did. When he has a big issue on his hands, such as the broken confidence that won Chateaul the friendship and protection of Mme de Pompadour, he is meticulous in setting out this evidence and leaving the reader to make up his own mind. Elsewhere he sometimes sets the scene so elaborately that one is rather talked into the assumption that it was the one Chateaul believed himself to be playing.

Butler's book will be indispensable to serious students of eighteenth-century France. It will give them all kinds of information, on all kinds of subjects that they could not get anywhere else. As a source of information, it is a treasure-house. Often it is much more, re-creating a picture of French aristocratic society in a manner almost worthy of Saint-Simon. What it does not do, oddly enough, is leave us with a very clear impression of Chateaul.

The fourth volume (539pp, Cornell University Press, £23.00 0 8014 1336 2) in the series, edited by Stanley J. Stein, *Lafayette in the Age of the American Revolution: Selected Letters and Papers, 1776-1790* covers the period April 1, 1781 — December 23, 1781 during which Lafayette, as commander of the American troops in the Virginia campaign, achieved outstanding success.

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The architecture of the emotions

By A. S. Byatt

V. S. PRITCHETT (Editor):
The Oxford Book of Short Stories
547pp. Oxford University Press.
£9.50.
0 19 214116 3

The impulse to write a short story, as Sir Victor Pritchett says, is very different from the impulse to write a novel. He himself distinguishes the "spontaneous poetic" idea for a story from the "poetic" idea for a novel. But he goes on to make it clear that by "poetic" he does not only mean that the story contains a moment of heightened awareness or sensibility; he means that it comes with a sense of crafted completeness, a powerful formal intention (like a sonnet), which is apparent from beginning to end. "Succinct" and "suggestive" are words he also uses, in an admirably succinct and suggestive introduction, before pointing out that the necessary shapeliness or tidiness of the story gives us "the sense that our restless lives achieve shape at times and that our emotions have their architecture".

There are various ways in which the good story can achieve its form. Its end, the "poetic impulse" can be mainly narrative; a complete episode, contained in the tale, which can achieve the status of tragedy or myth, primarily because of the events it tells. Walter Benjamin saw the novel as the internalized narrative of men whose sense of community, and of the shared wisdom of story-telling, had been lost in the eruption of the 1914-18 war. There are tales, including some in this collection, which convey "wisdom" in the way of narrative forms older than the novel. Equally there are tales that prove Aristotle's point that myth, fable, plot are more important to tragedy than character—I think of the endings of Ambrose Bierce's "The Coup de Grâce" and Frank O'Connor's "Guests of the Nation".

The poetic impulse can, too, as Pritchett points out, be something to do with suggesting a whole world from selected details—an epiphany which illuminates a whole character, or a whole society. A. E. Coppard's "Field of Mustard" has no narrative power, but it contains three lives and a whole way of living. Katherine Anne Porter's "Flowering Judas" attains a similar vision of a whole time and place, although there is a touch of the compressed novel about it that is irritating as well as tantalizing. Pritchett also points out both that short story writers are more aware of the international than are novelists, and that the form has been particularly fruitful for those working "on the frontier". In other senses, travellers like Kipling and Stevenson; Americans, particularly when giving details of the idiosyncrasies of particular American groups; New Zealanders, Austrians, the Third World when its authors write in English. The Irish exploit all the story's aspects, from the primitive mythic to the capacity for revealing and universalizing the parochial, or non-metropolitan; the Oxford Book represents these extremely well.

The "poetic impulse" can, finally, come in the form of the recognition of a "good subject" to be recognized up in the phrases are those of Ford Madox Ford, who made many excellent technical remarks about the kind of language required for the beginning of short stories, long tales, and novels. I should perhaps say here that this last impulse produces more "enjoyable" than "those stories" which, as it is this collection were ones which seem to have sprung from a professional writer's "good idea" for a story. William Sansom's "Rabbit" and Doris Lessing's "Prostitution" are excellent, rather than "good" or "enjoyable".

The stories are arranged chronologically and it is tempting to look at them in that order. The book is a collection of first-class and last-class tales, no excellent in the collection. He claims that the short

story in English began with Scott and was taken up by the Americans—Irving, Hawthorne, Poe. Scott's "Two Drovers", which opens the collection, tells the story of a man who is killed by a Highlander, in a border country, for reasons of national pride, and it economically creates the speech, the character, the national characteristics, the integrity of both men, as well as the timeless malice of the crowd in the tavern and the detached sense of the trial judge. Its pace is measured; not a word is wasted.

Hawthorne is represented by "The Birthmark" and Poe by "The Fall of the House of Usher", both of which I had trouble rereading. Our generation is prone to overrate Hawthorne's ambiguous symbolism, and I prefer his stories when his obsession with the New England pest of his play and anarchy. Equally, I prefer Poe when he is more psychological and less Gothic; V. S. Pritchett rejects James's "The Dead" and "The Real Thing" on grounds of over-exposure, which might have accounted for "The House of Usher", too. Twain is represented by a chatty piece of "old" nonsense about a celebrated jumping frog, and Bret Harte by "The Lion of Sandy Bar"—a gold-mining fable which, as its title suggests, exactly exemplifies the pleasures of narrative completion. So does Ambrose Bierce's Civil War moment of pity and terror, though it covers a few minutes whereas Harte's "Lion" plays two whole obsessed lives. The James story, "Pastor", is a sad thing if you love James: clever, not as good as Maupassant's story about paste jewellery, and with none of the Jamesian atmosphere of the unspoken, as well as not much of the precision of the spoken. Stevenson's "Thrawn Janet" is a classic, though there are others one would like to have seen.

Kipling's "Record of Badalle Herodotus" is perhaps the most perfect example of "wisdom" in tale form here, and one of the best things in the book: Cockney London, the mythically whole heroine, virtuous, profane, loving, the silly-wise deryn, and the cool depletion of violence exemplify narrative power at its highest. The Conrad, by contrast, "The Secret Sharer" is a meditation on the nature of things, a meditation on the physical enigma into the resemblances and differences of men, into courage, skill, and the apparent blankness of things, as well as the technicalities of putting a ship about in dangerous water; it goes slow, and spare, and its events are almost incidental to its central impulse. Ford compares Conrad's anthropomorphic, sea-painting with Stephen Crane's "The Open Boat"—a number of the really excellent pieces in this collection, much admired by Ford and others for its beginning, which shows the sea from the point of view of four men rowing away from a sinking ship. The precision with which Crane depicts physical exhaustion cannot offset physical exhaustion here; the central impulse must have been fully to imagine the sensations of the men in the boat. The narrative has outdone power—will they reach land?—but the story's energy comes from the writer's control of the senses, and of sensuous vocabulary.

The stories immediately surrounding Crane's are mostly "good-subject" "well worked". Do the Mare's "Ideal Craftsman" is excellently crafted and subtly ironic, though, like the James, it has more plot and less atmosphere than the author shows at his best. There is a Maugham story about a priest and a scoundrel executed, a Sherwood Anderson piece on a sensitive boy responding to horses and loathing men glimpsed in brothers that moment of adolescent sensuality before sexuality.

Lawrence is oddly and pleasantly represented by "The Rocking-Horse Winner", another "good subject" Lawrence's marvellous first sentence has a fairy-tale ring: "There was a

woman who was beautiful, who started with all the advantages, yet she had no luck." The child and the house in the tale crack up under the strain of "no luck", a theme one finds in much fiction of the period. The "idea" of the child finding race-winners by rocking his horse is a "wisdom", but the tone is the teller's "wisdom", and the virtue is the discussion of "luck". The Katherine Stone, "The Woman at the Store", is an unusual one in that it has a male narrator, a spare grim wit, and a shocking dénouement which I take to be its *raison d'être*, but it is well enough done for the reader to be glad to see a master writing well, and not to miss the precise sensibility which one associates more usually with her work.

There is a series of stories made of dialogue. James Joyce is represented by "Grace", for which, with its crabwise, irrelevant, pompous comic movement from pub to church, I am quite happy to forgo reading "The Dead" again. Ring Lardner offers a silly woman's disastrous monologue at a bridge-party, another good idea with some essential virtue, perhaps the voice, missing. And there is Hemingway's "Hills Like White Elephants", exploring economy of language and the deployment of banal speech stands against which all kinds of reverberating incongruities and ironies. No names to the characters, no end to the story, but an episode, a tale, a myth, all the same. By "Dry September" shows its contrivance not in the Southern whites' disposal of a negro accused of rape, which is told, but in the "working up" of the hysterical occasion.

Modern stories are wry. V. S. Pritchett offers one of his own in which three cyclists are disappointed of beer by a lonely and disappointed woman in what turns out not to be a tavern; the title, "Many are Disappointed" holds the levels of disappointment half-comically, half-

tragically together. Eudora Welty depicts "A Visit of Charity" by a reluctant schoolgirl to two demented old women in a home. The story manages to contain the whole life of a woman, from the Beckett-like irrelevant chatter of the old, end the death and decay, to her surprising recovery of youthful energy as she takes a free bite at an apple on the steps of the home, from which she has fled, demoralized. Patrick White shows the horrors of Australian suburbia, of an old woman's desire for love which turns out to be clumsily death-dealing; and John Cheever, the American master of the urbane, gets away with a density apparently that of a novel, in a story about a New England family which regards itself as "witty and enchanting" but is seen by the unacceptable, gloomy brother as decaying, infantile and silly. It is the brother who is defeated.

The last story is by John Updike, and is not a chronicle of marriage and divorce but an exuberant, comic, unexpected, apocalyptic monologue about the way of all flesh, by a theological student turned regard, who sits in a high chair over a beach full of sunbather, playful human bodies, observing man from infancy to the grave. It ends perfectly a collection whose first story, the Scott, deployed the skills of differentiation between the identities of men and nations, between love and death, pride and honour. Scott particularizes Updike's speaker generalizes: both get the human condition focused briefly in a tale.

If I have a criticism, it is an odd one to make of V. S. Pritchett, wise, witty and civilized as he is. The world of this series of shined lives, of "architecture of emotions", is so predominantly sad. It is a natural perhaps that brevity will lend quickly to death or horror, but where are the great comic short story writers? R. K. Narayan's excellent piece is the only truly funny one in this

book, though some of the wry ones (Mary Lavin, Flannery O'Connor) have their moments. Pritchett apologizes for excluding P. G. Wodehouse, among others, and includes Saki's "Sredni Vashtar" rather than any of his more comic tales. But there is no Damon Runyon (for whom I would happily have done without Ring Lardner) and the O. Henry has a note of sadness. And it would have been good to have an example of the ferocious wit of Grace Paley.

A list of writers omitted would be invidious, but there are areas of the short story that are not included. Where are the South Africans? Gordimer, Jacobson, both arguably at their best at this length. Muriel Spark, wickedly funny? And, at the international front, whilst we have no Kafka, no Borges, we do have the metaphysical wit of Beckett in English, and there are Americans like Coover and Barthelme whose absurd worlds are most complete in the brevity of the tale. Or the surreal—say John Hawkes? Or the black Africans/West Indians?

And what did I discover? Besides the Scott, and the Stephen Crane which gain authority from being anthologized, two stories held my attention completely. One is Flannery O'Connor's "Parker's Back", comic, awful, wholly imagined, with its proper tone, telling an inconsequential and inevitable tale of Parker, tattooed all over (except his back), his plain, cross religious pregnant wife, the Southern States and God. The other is Frank O'Connor's "Guests of the Nation", a piece of Irish tragedy, too generously con-

to be wry, and too terrible about the shooting of a pair of nice English soldiers as a reprisal by some reluctant Irishmen. Character, dialogue, surprise, inevitability... from this collection, one might conclude that the best stories are stories, and that there are those that make whole worlds out of very little, and then there are "good subjects".

Recognizing the legal

By A. W. B. Simpson

NEIL MACCORMICK:
H.L.A. Hart
184pp. Edward Arnold. £9.95.
(paperback, £4.95).
0 7131 6333 X

This is the first in a new series called "Jurists: Profiles in Legal Theory". William Twining, the general editor of this unattractively titled venture, explains its aim as being to produce "short authoritative reflective introductions to significant thinkers". Acquisition of the title "jurist" today normally entails prior arrival in the *Begriffshimmel*, or "Heaven of Juristic Concepts", so characterized by Rudolf von Ihering, who was undoubtedly a jurist (and one known to readers of the *Times Literary Supplement* as a distant relative of Olivia Newton John).

Herbert Hart, the object of Neil MacCormick's opening contribution to the series, is happily not so qualified; it is indeed rumoured that he is soon to produce a general reply to confound the critics, such as there are, of his best-known book, *The Concept of Law*. I certainly hope that this is so. Since it was published back in 1961, Hart, who had been a somewhat surprising appointment to the Oxford chair in 1952, has become the dominant figure in Anglo-American jurisprudence (the late Hans Kelsen, though long a resident in the United States, belonged essentially to a continental tradition). Apart from *The Concept of*

Law and his earlier collaborative work *Causation in the Law* (written with A. M. Honore), his other jurisprudential writings have principally been concerned with aspects of the relationship between law and morality, an interest which has produced two celebrated title fights—*Hart v Fuller* (1958) and *Hart v Deakin* (1958-9, with sequel). Who won has never really been established, and at the end of the day the question is not very interesting. The value of these controversies lay principally in the elegant presentation of different attitudes to law and legal values.

No mere list of publications would fairly chart Hart's influence on other scholars, an influence exercised not merely through writing and formal teaching but through numberless unrecorded discussions and conversations. Professor MacCormick himself long sat at his feet, and might have been forgiven for simply adding to the lives of the saints—miracles achieved (eg, some slight changes in emphasis in Oxford law teaching), peripatetic sufferings (eg, presided at governing-body meetings of an Oxford college), etc. Instead, he has provided a clear account of the main ideas contained in Hart's writings and of the principal criticisms which have been made of them, and to this he has added some modest proposals for Amendment. The only major attack on Hart's legal theory has been that by his successor in Oxford, Ronald Dworkin. Dworkin's elaborate argued thesis constitutes a curious mish-mash of theories of natural rights with versions of what used to be called "legal science", though I doubt whether it is the product of

work in the history of ideas. But in legal philosophy things seem to proceed in circles.

To date, Hart has not tinkered with the text of *The Concept of Law* in self-defence against his critics, though the book has been often reprinted. This surely has been wise, and the complexity of the book (superficially concealed by the very attractive style in which it was written), is such that answers to many possible objections may, by diligent search, be found lurking coyly in the text. Hence objections to particular aspects of Hart's theory of law can be accommodated either by plausible re-interpretation of what he himself has written, or at least by making minor amendments to it. MacCormick approaches his task in the kind-spirit of a sympathetic glossator: where he detects chinks in the armour, as with Hart's account of the nature of legal obligation, or the determining features of human nature, minor welding jobs will put matters to rights. And, if one accepts the validity of the tradition of jurisprudence to which Hart's work belongs, this is probably correct.

MacCormick characterizes this tradition as being analytical and philosophical, and contrasts it with the tradition of historical jurisprudence, particularly associated with speculative theorists such as Henry Maine, and with more practical historians, such as Vinogradoff. It seems to me that the Hart tradition could as well be called "idealist". In Hart's theory the unity of a legal system, and the mechanism whereby the legal character of social arrangements may be

differentiated from other social institutions, is to be sought in a rule of recognition, a test whereby the legal can be distinguished from the non-legal. But the elegantly constructed legal system described in *The Concept of Law*, with its unity determined by the rule of recognition, and identifying by determinate criteria the individual laws which constitute the system, is not the blueprint for all legal systems, or indeed of any legal system, even our own, which has ever actually existed.

So much is plain to anyone who attempts to state, with even approximate precision, the rule of recognition of our own legal system, now or at any other time in English history, much less attempts a non-circular definition of the society whose legal system it serves to identify and unify. *The Concept of Law* in fact sets out a blueprint for an ideal legal system, and an explanation of what such a system would have to be like if such legalistic values as that of the rule of law, not men, were over to be fully achieved in this messy world of ours. This does not mean that the theory has no contact with real legal systems. The fit is approximate, and the essential connection between theory and reality is to be sought in the world of values, not of action. The construction of such theories of law is not an empirical exercise, and their importance in furthering understanding of the nature of law and of legal systems lies not primarily in their power to explain actual social arrangements but in their power to illuminate a certain tradition of human aspiration. Inevitably those whose background has not

been the speculative world of philosophy but the empirically based worlds of comparative law, anthropology or history, have tended to prefer to study and explain the complex and disorganized arrangements whereby human beings in fact muddle through.

There is no incompatibility between the two traditions: their function is quite different. No field research or newly discovered constitutional document will in any way undermine the value of *The Concept of Law* as a classic analysis of the theoretical implications of the typical tradition of liberal western legalism, a tradition now in decline as the bureaucratic state, operating through administrative discretion, leaves less and less room for its practical expression. Hart's writings on punishment, criminal responsibility and the proper scope of the criminal law belong to the same tradition, as does the report of an Oxford committee "On Relations with Junior Members" which he chaired in 1968. This influential though now somewhat forgotten publication dealt not with such principles as "hands off the first year" but with more mundane problems of student discipline and representation. Its liberalizing recommendations influenced many universities, encouraging what some cynics might view as a general policy of unilateral disarmament in the face of growing student radicalism. MacCormick's treatment of Hart's writings on what may be lumped together as penal questions is slight, and does not adequately cover this aspect of his work. But in a short book this must surely be forgiven.

Among the principles he himself envisages are clear statements that the objective of scientific interference with human embryos must always be "to preserve and not to change humanity"; that priority must be given to correction and elimination of defects which clearly limit and curtail individual human potential; that there must never be any attempt to reduce or limit individual human potential. He adds that intervention to satisfy individual needs or preferences (for example for boys rather than girls) "must be assessed in terms of collective purposes and possible consequences". Suppressing bad memories of "Frankenstein's Laws of Robotics" (Law 1: a robot shall never harm a human being...), which all this evokes, one is forced to agree that some such principles must be established. But how?

Grobstein thinks that external fertilization is only an indicator of contemporary man's "inextinguishable tendency" to "flail, flappable and flammable" though he is to take life, even its creation and modification into his own hands. He suggests that we may be at the beginning of an "epochal transformation in human reproduction" (hence presumably the title of his book) and he urges that whatever our decisions about how such a transformation should be controlled or stopped, we need to make those decisions "in a way that commands general respect and can be regarded with pride by future generations". Moreover, the decisions themselves will need to have "an impact comparable in duration to that of the Ten Commandments or Magna Carta".

Grobstein's answer deserves serious consideration. He suggests the creation of a "rolling presidential" (Royal?) commission on "Intervention in Human Heredity and Development" whose brief would be to review and monitor relevant scientific and technological advances and make appropriate recommendations for policy. The commission would have a research staff, would be empowered to hold public hearings, and would publish reports and recommendations at least once a year, with an obligation on government to comment on any recommendations within three months of receipt. The commission would be inter-disciplinary and consist of perhaps ten experts from relevant fields such as the appropriate scientific and medical disciplines, religion, moral philosophy, law, as well as say five non-specialist members "selected for their high public standing and sensitivity to public attitudes".

Whether such a commission would come up with the Ten Commandments or Magna Carta may be doubted, but it would surely improve the quality of decision-making on these matters not only in Parliament but also perhaps in the laboratory and in the clinic.

The reproductive revolution

By Raanan Gillon

CLIFFORD GROBSTEIN:
From Chance to Purpose:
An Appraisal of External Human Fertilization
207pp. Addison-Wesley. £9.60.
0 201 04585 0

The world's first test-tube baby, as the popular press had already dubbed her, was born in England in July 1978. Since then a dozen or so apparently normal children have come into the world as a result of *in vitro* or external fertilization and many more are said to be currently on the way, all of them bringing or about to bring great happiness to previously infertile couples. Recently the Ministry of Health has even sanctioned provision of the method by the National Health Service.

Reaction to this remarkable development of medical science and technology has not been uniformly positive. Bland acceptance, vociferous praise and demands for more funds since lost have been counterpoised by profound disquiet, angry denunciation and baying for a ban.

What are we to think? Are we dealing merely with a clever new method of overcoming certain types of infertility? Or are we taking a small step for mankind towards a Brave New World? Clifford Grobstein, an eminent American developmental biologist with a long-standing interest in the philosophical and socio-political implications of advances in the biosciences, offers an astute analysis of the controversy, together with suggestions aimed at its at least partial resolution.

Underpinning his analysis is a helpful and for the most part perfect first-rate account of the relevant scientific facts. Normal fertilization and embryo-fetal development, and the basic techniques of external fertilization, are described simply and clearly as are the various research procedures already being used on experimental mouse and other mammalian embryos and which might be used on human embryos (though perhaps his account of gonocyte engineering is too condensed to

be quite clear to non-scientists). Among the somewhat awesome prospects offered, along with possible rationales for their application to humans, is freeze storage of living embryos in liquid nitrogen—apparently the risk of genetic damage is likely to be insignificant for the first 200-1,000 years. Another is the cultivation of individual organs, which might provide a replacement service for damaged, diseased or defective parts and obviate the present need to raid the living dead. In this context Grobstein points out that if individual ovaries could be cultivated, operations to obtain human eggs would become redundant and the embryologist of the future—at least the male embryologist—would require no one else's cooperation to provide himself with an unlimited supply of experimental human embryos. Other techniques described are cloning to produce large numbers of genetically identical embryos; the combining of parts of different embryos; the insertion of certain sorts of cancer cells into embryos; and of course genetic engineering, in which changes are made directly to the genes, for example in efforts to eliminate inherited diseases.

Grobstein's analysis of the moral and social issues related to external human fertilization is certainly comprehensive though, not surprisingly, breadth of analysis is not everywhere matched by depth. With scrupulous fairness he gives the bare bones of arguments for and against the "unnaturalness" of external fertilization; its tendency to undermine respect for "humanness" and to "biologize the species"; its liability to confound issues of descent; its overriding of the rights of the developing embryo; its encouragement of the hubris of playing God; and its danger as the first step on that slippery slope down towards the great grey building of the Human Hierarchy and Conditioning Centres. (Incidentally it does seem hard on Aldous Huxley that Grobstein's single literary—as distinct from academic—reference should be to George Orwell.)

There is much to question in Grobstein's philosophical discussion of the implications of external fertilization, but the interesting feature is his focus on the concept of "personhood". His suggestion—one which is

again finding philosophical favour—is that concern for persons is the essence of morality and that being a person is the passport to inalienable basic rights such as the right to life, to self-determination or autonomy, to respect from others and so on. Kent's kingdom of ends is a kingdom of persons. Now all this is not of much direct importance for external fertilization since even if the very early embryo were a person it is hard to see what moral imperative is ignored or harmed done in transferring it from a test-tube to a mother's womb. However the primacy of personhood may be a crucial concept when assessing associated issues, such as the moral legitimacy or otherwise of experiments on human embryos and foetuses; abortion; genetic engineering and cloning; not to mention such problems as whether or not it is morally permissible to kill or to allow to die severely defective newborn infants and irreversibly unconscious or even merely irreversibly unselfconscious humans.

The integration of the concept of personhood into mainstream moral philosophy is only just beginning and is fraught with problems. What about senile grandpa who seems to have no self-awareness—is he a

person? If not, has he therefore lost his previously inalienable right to life? One might think that grandpa is still a person because he is still conscious (sentient) even though not necessarily self-conscious but if consciousness in humans is to be a sufficient criterion for personhood and personhood bestows inalienable basic rights then we surely can't permit abortions after the foetus has become sentient—which according to Grobstein may be as early as seven or eight weeks? Conversely, if self-awareness is to be the criterion for personhood, thus permitting abortion of sentient but not self-aware foetuses, why should we be squeamish about bumping off grandpa?

Grobstein thinks that external fertilization is only an indicator of contemporary man's "inextinguishable tendency" to "flail, flappable and flammable" though he is to take life, even its creation and modification into his own hands. He suggests that we may be at the beginning of an "epochal transformation in human reproduction" (hence presumably the title of his book) and he urges that whatever our decisions about how such a transformation should be controlled or stopped, we need to make those decisions "in a way that commands

Myopia in Rupert Brooke Country

Birds, feathers, a few leaves, flakes of soot—things start to fall. The stubble has been burned, and the fields are striped in black and gold. Elsewhere, the hay is still drying on long racks; bulky men prancing about on slender hooves, unconvinced as pantomime cattle... A hedgehog lies rolled over on its side like a broken castor. Abandoned in one corner is a caravan that has not been on holiday all year. Forever England. A hot-air balloon sinks towards the horizon—the amateur spirit or an advertising gimmick? Quickly flames light it up, the primitive roar of a kitchen geyser, and its scalded heart gives a little skip, then slides down like tears.

Michael Hofmann

Within the starched breast

By Carol Rumens

COLLEEN McCULLOUGH:
An Indecent Obsession
314pp. Macdonald. £6.95.
0 354 048147

Belying its label, Colleen McCullough's new chaperon is in the mould of one of those improving tales for young ladies with which our grandmothers were expected to educate their souls. "Or, Sister Langtry chooses the Path of Duty" would have made an excellent sub-title, containing enough of a clue perhaps to save the reader from spending the whole volume worrying mildly about the identity of the "indecent obsession" and drawing various, consistently wrong, conclusions. In fact, McCullough scatters clues liberally throughout, though that "indecent" has served to throw us off the scent. In the last paragraph she spells it all out: "duty" is the obsession in question, though McCullough adds, in an attempt at profundity, that "duty is only another name for love". Is that why it is indecent? There seems to be no other justification in the novel's pages for this brand of heavy irony. In fact, begins and ends with the title, though a dose of it would have been beneficial to the

character of Sister Langtry, seeming an amalgam of every screen and pulp-fiction Superwoman who has confronted the world of suffering manhood with a starched breast and soft, susceptible heart.

The action takes place in a hospital for servicemen on one of the Pacific islands at the end of the Second World War. Sister Langtry's ward, Ward X, is occupied by a small group of men who have "gone tropical" — euphemism for mental breakdown, derived from "tropical". All her patients are, we are told, "in love" in some way with Sister Langtry, a middle-class thirty-one-year-old Australian from a wealthy farming family, "very well-read in a posh girls' school way". Despite the idealism her author wishes upon her, Sister Langtry spends a great deal of her time sexually sizing up her patients. Michael, whose arrival the first section of the book laboriously charts, is of immediate fascination, although "Sis", we learn, is already involved with another patient, Neil (officer-class, like her), and has been on the verge of succumbing to the beautiful but psychopathic Luce. For love and duty it is clearly going to be a long war.

Michael is presented as a "sane" character, and therefore an alien, treated with suspicion by the others in Ward X. However he has almost killed his RSM ("his thumbs pressing down on the hyoid cartilage he had

gloried in the sheer feeling of it"), and his habit of befriending those weaker than himself has led to allegations of homosexuality. These the masochist Luce is quick to seize on and maliciously use. McCullough touches on some interesting areas of ambiguity: between sane and insane, heterosexual and homosexual, lust and bloodlust, male and female attitudes to sex, but fails to explore them in the depth they merit. She is far more interested in her heroine's state of romantically polarized conflict between Neil and Michael, love and duty. Her attempts at showing us the self-questioning side of Langtry produce some feeble interior monologues which reveal little more than the author's strings at work.

Too many of the other characters (hypochondriac Nugget, crusty misogynist Colonel Donaldson) seem to be out of the Hospital Writer's Casebook; Luce, however, is convincing, with his veneer of swaggering machismo and his bitter social resentments. His death occurs offstage and his unpleasantness is handled with restraint. However, there is surely a missed opportunity here; McCullough might have involved the reader with the one character of tragic potential. Nor does the "wooden" prison amount to very much. So manipulative a writer is unwilling to leave her readers the space in which to form their own doubts and draw their own conclusions.

The least one might expect from a best-selling author is the ability to tell a gripping story, but McCullough's narrative is often slow, plodding and short on surprise. The argument between love and duty becomes increasingly banal after the climax of Luce's death — "her well was crooked, her duty hat that never, never betrayed her. Love might, duty never did". But at least the last, postwar section with Sister Langtry permanently committed to psychiatric nursing in idealized surroundings attains a sober realism between the bouts of moralizing, and the avoidance of wedding-bells and happily-ever-after comes as a pleasant relief.

Sweet surrender

By Michael Hofmann

WINIFRED WOLFE:
Josie's Way
313pp. Plakus. £6.95.
0 86188 092 7

Winifred Wolfe's early novel, *Ask Any Girl*, was made into a successful film starring David Niven. Then, for the next twenty years, she worked on television scripts. *Josie's Way* might be billed as her return to fiction, her first love.

Not surprisingly, given Ma Wolfe's career, *Josie's Way* is one of those books whose every page breathes, "Film me, please film me." Its cover is graced with an opulent and atmospheric photograph of a still: a full-cream Swiss blonde sitting in front of her dressing-table, wearing a negligée and desolately thumbing through her diary. The novel itself is a constant incitement to the reader to play at Dork-Yourself Casting (there is, alas, no part for Mr Niven here). Certainly, very little would be lost in any adaptation of it for the cinema — or, better, for one of those unenviable, yet indelibly habit-forming television serials. Easily the better part of *Josie's Way* is dialogue already, with description confined to the level of stage-directions; the story has a bold and acceptable outline; the handful of indoor settings are cheap and easily distinguished; there are "ebullient" parts for the two main characters, and half a dozen reasonable cameo appearances for the rest. Residual features of the book are perhaps best dispensed with. Certain lapidary reflections — for instance, the closing, "the great difficulty in life did not so much arise in the choice between good and evil as in the choice between good and good" — can easily be supplied by the sated audience in front of the set, or shuffling out of the cinema.

The plot is that pathetic evergreen: the artist as shaman supplies the sexual and spiritual needs

(though especially the latter) of the unconsciously frustrated housewife. Ben (curiously also the name of the male catalyst in *The Women's Room*)

Stouidy is a sculptor, Josie is his human clay — though she is less tractable than previous incumbents of the role — and Ted Trask is the wily and obnoxious husband. Overcoming her immediate panic at Ben's intervention in her dull, merely supportive existence, Josie discovers a latent interest in sculpture and spends most of the next six months in Ben's work-barn, creating busts of her two children. At the same time, her husband, who edits an independent-minded local newspaper, undergoes difficulties, in which — in the absence of his wife — he turns to his live-in mother for support. Josie loses ground in her family. There is a predictable crisis when she eventually succumbs to Ben's artistic advances, and, scandalously, misses her son's birthday party. Finally, however, she makes the correct "good choice" to favour of family and agnosticism: a decision which registers the events of the whole novel to meaningfulness.

Written as it is to be screened and not to be read, *Josie's Way* is full of clichés. The characters speak like those in photo-romances. Occasionally, one comes across unwitting humour in the type of description that provided pop-art with its prefabricated statements on modern life. Synecdoche: "She was sitting opposite those intensely blue, medically trained eyes." Or Zeugma: "What bothered her were the artificial plants and her own growing uneasiness." There are occasional lapses of technique, as when Ma Wolfe has her characters using the pluperfect tense — excessively rare in speech. Somewhere in the middle, there is one brilliant scene in which Josie's next-door neighbour meets her in New York and tries to seduce her in his hideously appointed flat. The toilet-seat is styled "Sisfril", says Tony as he conducts her through his banal fantasies and natty décor. But no sweet surrender follows. Ask any girl.

LITERATURE

The Tennyson Research Centre at Lincoln has recently acquired through Sotheby's the autograph manuscript of the following previous unknown poem by Tennyson. I am grateful to Lord Tennyson and to the Lincolnshire Library Services for permission to publish it.

"Yours & caetera" O how cold!
Whose designing fits have caught you?

Quarrel with a friend so old!
But whoever taught you,
It will not hold, it will not hold.

Such a note to come from you!
What has vexed you? Who has swayed you?

Quarrel with a friend so true!
But whoever made you,
It will not do, it will not do.

A letter by Tennyson never before published in its entirety (very kindly drawn to my attention by Professor C.Y. Luog of the University of Virginia and printed below by permission of Duke University Library, North Carolina) makes it clear that these touching verses must have been addressed in early 1851 to Sophy Elmhirst (née Rawnsley). Sophy Elmhirst was the daughter of Thomas Hardwicke Rawnsley, Rector of Hallow Holgate in Lincolnshire. Rawnsley had been a close and loyal friend of Tennyson's father and after 1831 acted as confidant and guardian of his friend's widow and children. Born in 1818, Sophy was known to Tennyson from her earliest years, and by the mid-1830s, while the Tennyson family were still occupying the rectory at Somersby, the poet had developed a deeply affectionate (it appears to have been no more) regard for her. The friendship continued after the Tennysons left Lincolnshire in 1837, and the 1840s saw Tennyson frequently visiting Sophy as Mrs Elmhirst, wife of the Rector of Shawell in Leicestershire.

The disturbance in their relations which is reflected in the new poem occurred about eight months after Tennyson's marriage in June, 1850, to Emily Sellwood (at which ceremony Sophy's brother, Drummond Rawnsley, had officiated). It was at a time when Alfred and Emily Tennyson were trying to find a home, following an abortive attempt in mid-January, 1851, to settle in a house called "The Hill" in Werningford near Hortham, Wiltshire. As R.B. Marlin has recently observed in *Tennyson: The Unquiet Heart*, by the fact that on their second night in the house "part of the wall in their bedroom was blown in, so that the rain poured upon them in bed", the Tennysons moved, even though they had to pay £85 for buying out their lease. On evacuating "The Hill" they went first (on February 3) to stay with Drummond Rawnsley at his vicarage in Shipplake-on-Thames, and thence (setting out on February 19 and arriving on the 20th) to Park House, near Maidstone, home of Edmund Lushington, husband of Tennyson's sister Cecilia. It was during this stay at Park House that Tennyson sent the letter which identifies for us Sophy Elmhirst as the subject of "Yours & caetera" O how cold!

The letter is undated but the accompanying envelope, directed to "Mrs Elmhirst/Shawell Rectory/Lutterworth", bears Maidstone and Rugby postmarks of February 22 and 24, 1851, respectively.

My dear Sophy,
Emily fell down a step at Reigate (on the journey from Shipplake to Park House) and sprained her ankle and has ever since suffered a good deal of pain. I have had in other ways a great deal of trouble and perplexity and am yet (tho' paying £25 a year for a house) without a house to live in. If she were not one of the sweetest and justest natures in the world I

should be almost at my wit's end (as the saying is) but she bears with me and with her troubles and mine. Now I feel hurt at the letter you have written me. You ought to have known me better than to have accused me of expressing myself as annoyed at your invitation. I was really amazed at your accusation and took some pains to inquire what you could mean. At last I find out that Emily said to Kate Catherine, wife of Drummond Rawnsley, that I was annoyed that I could not come or annoyed that you wouldn't believe I couldn't. Is being annoyed that I could not come or being annoyed that you wouldn't believe me the same thing as being annoyed that I was asked? It is not just the contrary? Sophy, Sophy how could you? under whose influence are you acting to misinterpret so unhappily? I had rarely fancied that you did know a little more of me and that I am not the wretchedcock of change you would make me. Really your note is not kind and to sign yourself "Yours & c" makes it worse. I do not love unkind things to be thought said or done, and least of all did I expect it of you. Pray, reconsider, and see if you be not the party to fault: as for me I am (as I have always been)

By Aidan Day

Yours not
& c & c
but
affectionately

If not believing him that he could not.
Yours affectionately
Emily Tennyson

Sophy's hurtful letter does not appear to have survived. Nor has it been possible to establish the exact nature of her invitation. But that she repeated it seems to have led to a chain of reactions that put her, in Tennyson's eyes at least, in the reverse of the position she had occupied when, some fifteen or so years earlier, she had fallen out with him at a county ball in Spishly in Lincolnshire, an occasion Tennyson recorded in his sonnet "To thee, with whom my heart's affections dwell".

The constancies of feeling between the two friends were not to be lastingly disrupted through a misunderstanding over an invitation. In June, 1871, in a letter printed by Illini Tennyson in his *Memoir of his father*, Tennyson wrote to Sophy ex-

pressing his sympathy over the death of her son:

... I thought of writing at the moment when I first heard of your great affliction, but somehow I myself have always felt that letters of condolence, when the grief is yet raw and painful, are like vain voices in the ears of the deaf, not heard or only half heard. "The heart knoweth its own bitterness," and a stranger meddeth not therewith, though I am not a stranger indeed, but your old friend from your childhood.

The poem, along with a copy of William Trollope's *Penelope's Grace* (1835) extensively annotated by Tennyson in his youth, was bought at a Sotheby's sale on July 27, 1981. Further details on the manuscript, together with an account of Tennyson's copy of the *Penelope's Grace*, will appear in a future issue of the *Tennyson Research Bulletin*.

Atomically perceptive

By John Batchelor

C. H. SALTER:
Good Little Thomas Hardy
200pp. Macmillan. £15.
0 333 29387 8

In the final chapter of *Good Little Thomas Hardy*, C. H. Salter briefly and somewhat bleakly sets out what he regards as "The Good" in Hardy. Perhaps I may adopt his own uncompromising sense of categories: "The Good" in Salter's book is to be found in his brisk but not (on the whole) unjust handling of other scholars, his knowledge of Hardy's work and his ability to present his findings in an organized way. He is right to say that the chronological development of a "great web" perceived in Hardy's novels by some critics is an illusion — early works like *Under the Greenwood Tree* and *Far from the Madding Crowd* are as densely written as *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, as he points out — and it is true that Hardy is inaccurate about the world he lives in (unfair to late Victorian Oxford in *Jude the Obscure*, for instance) and awkward in ways which cannot be satisfactorily explained by saying that he was primarily a folk-artist, poet or mythmaker. Salter's third chapter, "Ideas", is particularly crisp and persuasive. He argues here that Hardy owes a great deal to Darwin (Hardy "never claimed to have read *The Origin of Species*"), Comte, Mill or Arnold, that he exaggerated his own intellectual debt to Leslie Stephen and that the most interesting aspect of Hardy's relationship with Stephen is their common enthusiasm for the eighteenth century.

Among other things the essay contains a one-sided definition of the word "Nature" — very handy to have. T. J. Diffey's "The Roots of the Imagination" traces the emergence of romantic philosophy through the eighteenth century, and is especially helpful in disentangling the several senses of the word "imagination" as used by Coleridge, Blake and Wordsworth. His analysis of Blake's language by comparison with that of a modern guidebook shows an awareness of his reader's experience and concerns. The effect is stimulating.

This book may be recommended less to students than as a refresher course for their teachers, though the Diffey and the first Prickett essays could prove very useful for relative beginners. The effect of the collection as a whole is to prompt the recollection that it is the romantic poets, and not their contemporaries, which makes it still vital to attend to what they wrote.

The December 1981 volume of *The Library: Transactions of the Bibliographical Society*, Sixth Series, Volume 3, Number 4 (Oxford University Press, Annual subscription £18, £44 US) contains an article by Aidan Day on "The Lincoln Manuscript Fragment of Tennyson's 'The Romanesque and Religion'". Other articles in this issue are "Archbishop William King's Library Catalogue" by Robert S. Matteson, "How Many Copies of *Tina Andronicus* Q3 are Extant?" by G. Harold Metz and "Changes in the 1823 Edition of *Frankenstein*" by B. Murray.

Manufacturing a movement

By Glen Cavallero

STEPHEN PRICKETT (Editor)
The Romantics
267pp. Methuen. £9.50 (paperback, £4.95).
0 416 72010 2

These essays form part of the "Context of English Literature" series. The authors are all members of the University of Sussex; their aim is to present the Romantic poets "as characterizing a distinctive age, or even a society". But connections and influences are easier to establish in the philosophical and religious fields than they are in those of history or art. Seek to apply the study of other disciplines to a given subject and you need an outside volume to contain your findings. Despite the learning, care and occasional wit that have gone into this book, I am still left wondering as to the point of such an undertaking. The subject is so vast as to invite either simplification or undue compression.

The chief sufferer from the need to compress is Colin Brooks: his essay on "The Historical Context" almost reads like an amalgam of the wessib of sociological detail, exercised assumes on the student-reader's part a knowledge which, by definition, he cannot possess. It would take an exceptionally well-stocked mind to master such an infernal method of relating facts. Either by way of suggestive point is made, or by way of image (the present grandeur of Assize Courts in our provincial towns — are they something to be proud of, or by such authors pertinently asked?) or by such quotations as "Wilberforce's questionable, though widely endorsed, contention that the summit of human happiness lies 'in the cottage of the peasant surrounded with his smiling family'".

Students new to the period have little to learn from such a volume.

dence together, nor do stylistic graces ease their way. In this respect Morris Pagnon's essay on "Romanticism in English Art" is more systematic; but her conclusion that "Romanticism in the visual arts has no overriding single characteristic", while incontrovertible as she presents it, seems to negate the premises on which the collection as a whole is based. Whereas she and Colin Brooks both demonstrate the variety and changeableness of the period 1770-1830, neither of them submits to the task for studying the major Romantics as part of a literary or even social movement.

Stephen Prickett's two essays, especially that on "The Religious Context", are more directly informative. The connections he makes between Romanticism and the Evangelical Revival are persuasive and, on occasion, plithly expressed: he refers to Wordsworth's line "fostered alike by beauty and by fear" as a "secularized epigraph to the whole growth of Methodism". It is, however, surely going too far to suggest, as he does, that the Bible, rather than Classical literature, was the main inspiration of the Romantic poets. This may be true of Coleridge, Blake and Wordsworth, in whom the author is evidently most interested; but it hardly applies to Scott or Shelley, Byron or Keats, all of whom are curiously treated. But his elevation of Newman to a place among the Romantics shows the relevance of Catholic sacramentalism to Romantic thought, as do the comments on *The Grammar of Assent*, which relate Newman's "illative sense" to Coleridge's theory of the primary imagination. This essay could serve as a preface to Prickett's valuable *Romanticism and Religion* (1976).

His second essay, on "Romantic Literature", is highly selective. Moreover, enlightening generalizations are peppered with small inaccuracies, for instance the suggestion that the term "Waverley novels" describes only Scott's earlier fiction;

or with too easy collocations, such as that of *The Castle of Otranto* with *Vathek*, which does disservice to Beckford's mock-serious irony. But Prickett puts his finger on the source of Romanticism's decline. "Like all his contemporaries, including Peacock, Shelley's defence of poetry was achieved primarily by a discussion of the poet, not of poetry." However ungrammatically, the point is well made.

Among other things the essay contains a one-sided definition of the word "Nature" — very handy to have. T. J. Diffey's "The Roots of the Imagination" traces the emergence of romantic philosophy through the eighteenth century, and is especially helpful in disentangling the several senses of the word "imagination" as used by Coleridge, Blake and Wordsworth. His analysis of Blake's language by comparison with that of a modern guidebook shows an awareness of his reader's experience and concerns. The effect is stimulating.

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A feline revenge

By David Profumo

LEE JORDAN:
Cat's Eyes
170pp. Hodder and Stoughton. £5.95.
0 340 27244 9

Lee Jordan sounds like a character from *Dallas*, but in fact the pseudonym of an experienced husband-and-wife writing team. Precisely how their respective contributions were combined it would be interesting to know; certainly their joint experience in a range of writing skills is evident, for *Cat's Eyes* is a very efficiently woven novel of suspense and mystery, threaded carefully with false clues and circumstantial details. The story is ingenious without becoming baffling or preposterous.

Rachel Chester is a Californian writer living in an area of rural Sussex which appears to be teeming with feral cats and scavenging dogs. Her nervous husband, Bill, is called away to Hollywood on a script-writing assignment soon after she has returned from hospital, following a car accident in which she injured her leg while swerving to avoid a large cat in the lane. Their lascivious handyman, Charlie Leech, was killed in the accident, and Rachel is haunted by subsequent nightmares in which she imagines his face at her window; her distress is hardly assuaged by Charlie's widow, who not only holds Rachel responsible for his death, but accuses her of sleeping with him into the bargain.

Her wretched hours are further disturbed by increasingly frequent visitations from the furtive feline, who appears to be intent on penetrating her home by night, and in her agitated state Rachel begins to believe that it is playing its long-crimped in the accident. To make matters worse, a number of unpleasant and unexplained events cause her to suspect that her absent husband may be engineering her disappearance. Her dog is poisoned, her baby daughter is attacked, and she receives alarming telephone calls — and there is only one neighbour to whom she can turn for support. Also Webb is a battle-scarred former vet who tries to reassure her that there is nothing sinister about the elusive cat, but eventually abandons state concerns and her husband, along with the beleaguered Mrs Leech, and disappears. But the cat is unstoppable.

As books of this type should, *Cat's Eyes* keeps the reader speculating throughout about the conclusion to the plot, but the authors sometimes steer with a heavy hand. At every stage of the narrative the reader's imaginative participation is restricted by the comprehensive detail in which every action, however small, is described: "while this has the merit of ensuring that no-one loses his way, it can also result in passages of information on a number of salient but nevertheless unenthralling topics such as the causes of cat deaths, the sleeping posture of dogs, the art of making bedgown wines, and a minor treatise on the cerebellum of cats. The background research which this implies is laudable, but such busy erudition tends to interrupt the narrative, and is connected to another irritating tendency that might be termed the Dossier Effect: a new character is no sooner introduced than we are treated to an instant summary of his life history, a curriculum vitae which establishes his background and credentials for the rest of the book. It is sometimes more interesting to discover things as we go along. For example, the deviously inquisitive Celia James chats thus to Rachel: "Tell me about yourself, Rachel — and your husband", an invitation which leads to a rapid survey of Rachel's life and career in America, until, drained of biographical detail, she admits, "I'm talking too much."

Where this technique of pressing information on the reader is successful, though, is in the treatment of the cat itself. By punctuating the book with glimpses of the beast moving as a free agent, the claustrophobic fearfulness of Rachel's existence is contrasted with the cat's independence, and the way she senses that she is under siege from a ruthless and calculating intelligence is reinforced by the details of the cat's bloodthirsty past.

Maureen Brady's first novel, *Give Me Your Good Bye* (1979), was published by the Women's Press. Paperback £2.95. 0 7043 3874 2) concerns the troubled childhood and adult life of Francis Kelly, who as a girl is the "silent witness to violent events", and who, as a woman, "works towards being alone through choices", finds that "her memory of those events" stuck in the painful perceptions of childhood, "suddenly shifts". Adrienne Rich's *Women's Work* (1979) is a collection of essays on the work, female connections, these are the "waste and what are perceived through a woman's eyes, largely unavailable to us in fiction. The integrity of Brady's writing never falters.

The female melting pot

By Virginia Llewellyn Smith

ANGELA CARTER, MURIEL CERF and others
Sex and Sensibility
Stories by Contemporary Women
Writers from nine countries
248pp. Sidgwick and Jackson. £6.95.
0 283 98670 0

Writing Women
19 Osborne Road, Newcastle-on-Tyne NE2 2 AH
Subscription: £3.25 for 3 issues per year.

There are various ways of helping women writers to see themselves in print and to be read in the context of feminism — two aims which any book that calls itself a "publishing project" is likely to regard as interconnected. The book in question has chosen one way, that of publishing established women writers. With the idea of reflecting the experience of women to the emancipation process, eight European firms and one in the US have produced, and published simultaneously, a cosmopolitan anthology of stories written by women in the last decade. The jacket, presumably, is the same for each edition, with the contributors' photographs ranged on the back like finalists in an intellectual Miss World contest (is there not a wiff of the male in this commercial gambit?), but have the other publishers, called the book anything as crisp as *Sex and Sensibility*? Do we need this taxonomy of a title proposed over our experience to keep it at the same time warm and deft? Or is it meant to imply, echoing Jane Austen's antithesis, that sex is one thing and sensibility quite another?

Certainly this book is not about having a good time in bed with men. A recurrent theme is that women, finding a variety of their needs not satisfied by men, turn to other

women for relationships in which companionship and rather vague notions of freedom are more important than sex itself. In attempts to express the age-old truth that there's more to life than men, the melting-pot of female wisdom gets a thorough stirring, throwing up heartening chunks of a woman never loses anything during a night of lovemaking when she's giving herself to a man.

But the writing is not all like this, and the stories differ on several levels of technique and approach. Muriel Cerf's surrealistic, verbally adept tale of a brilliant beauty who abandons her rich fiancé for a love-affair with a one-armed bandit is worlds away from Britta Arenander's wry account of a Stockholm secret-keeper whose blind date fails to come up to her baldly explicit requirements ("a man who can maintain sexual intercourse for longer than two minutes, and who has a minimum of independent thought in his skull"). Shulamith Hareven, in "Loneliness", writes simply and warmly about a well-heeled Jerusalem housewife. Gall Goodwin in "Childhood Friends" lays bare similarities in intellectual and emotional life between two women, one in the American, sophisticated vein of Alison Lurie, but her device of presenting the narrative as "Notes for a story" is pretentious and irritating, except where it enables her to avoid some longwinded incoherence in the subject-matter ("Have Catherine relate, in detail, some of her cataclysmic experiences with lovers"). It is hard to avoid an overall impression that the stories were selected with some care, but some of the contributions may not represent their authors' best work.

Children appear as incidental props in several of the stories, but nobody writes about a mother's feelings for her children, though these feelings are a major preoccupation of

a great many women, emancipated or not. Sigrid Brunk's "Linda" concerns the conflict between a woman's vision of herself as a mother, and her career persons, which is also a common preoccupation, but not the same one, and Hanne Melkeme's "My Mother's Name", which purports to be a child's view of her mother (warm, mature and caring) would lose nothing of its emotional or artistic impact by being prefaced on Jackie's teenage problem page.

The best piece is Angela Carter's patchy, inconsequential "The Quill Maker", though perhaps I am subconsciously prejudiced in favour of the home team (reverberations of Miss World again). None of the authors seems to have lost much in translation, except perhaps Cerf and I expect "your eyes of a woods at dawn" sounds better in Catalan).

A second way to promote women's writing is to offer all aspirants a place in which to do it and a sympathetic female editorship. This is what a new journal, *Writing Women*, sets out to do. Its first issue is inevitably a mixed bag, featuring some well-known names (Elinor Feinstein, Lorraine Hansberry) and some who will never be well known. It includes a critique of *The Portrait of a Lady* by Diana Collecott, whose approach to her subject is first of a social worker compiling case-notes, prove that Henry James should never have been given charge of Isabel Archer. Though I think such criticism wildly misguided, I would rather see grim Collecott scolding grim, sexually aggressive Caspar Goodwin turn back a few pages and be faced with "cottage cheese mashed with butter" banished from the table, an essay by Joan Michaelson's "Journal of a Frequent Traveller" (1979), fifteen pages of "four hour session of vomiting and dry retching" — Nose bleed, vaginal discharge, viscous white" and the like. It may possibly be liberating to write this, but it is boring to read it.

The extraction business

By O M Brack

Eighteenth-Century British Books

An Author Union Catalogue, extracted from the British Museum General Catalogue of Printed Books, the Catalogues of the Bodleian Library, and of the University Library, Cambridge, by F. J. G. Robinson, G. Averley, D. R. Easlemon and P. J. Wallis. Five volumes £1.250.

A Subject Catalogue, extracted from the British Museum General Catalogue of Printed Books by G. Averley, A. Flowers, F. J. G. Robinson, E. A. Thompson, R. V. and P. J. Wallis. Four volumes £600.

Project for Historical Bibliography, University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Folkestone: Dawson.

Since the Second World War few years have gone by when one group of scholars or not, was not attempting to organize an Eighteenth-Century Short-Title Catalogue. For a long time the problems seemed insurmountable, with no consensus on scope or coverage, cataloguing methodology, the number of titles printed in the period, or the probable cost. Then in 1976, an Anglo-American ESTC Conference was held at the British Library, and after much discussion and several pilot projects, the British Library Board approved the re-cataloguing of its eighteenth-century holdings; on STC at last seemed possible.

Work on the ESTC at the British Library has progressed well, and by 1982-83 it is anticipated that the entire collection of 150,000 entries, catalogued according to modern rules adapted to the needs of older books, will be published on microfiche. A typical entry will have the author, title (transcribed as fully as necessary to ensure a correct filing sequence), to avoid confusion with similar titles, and to indicate the content of the work), place of publication, publisher (up to seven names), date, collation, shelfmarks, and notes both general and specific. After the BL base file has been completed, it will be enriched by records from libraries in Great Britain and from related projects in the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Germany, and other countries. The total number of records is expected to exceed 300,000 from over a million locations. At this time a microfiche edition will be produced backed-up by on-line access to the data base in Great Britain and North America.

If the forthcoming ESTC is the original, then the works under review can only be described as parody. The prospectus for the *Author Union Catalogue* abounds with assurances of the novelty and usefulness of these two catalogues:

The catalogue was designed as a source for historical research and has been developed from the original file of the holdings of the British Library which was used to create the recently published *Subject Catalogue*. The variations in cataloguing practice between the three libraries have been accommodated to one another on the general basis of British Library practice, but with the principle of historical usefulness in mind, rather than the strict rules of bibliography. These catalogues have been designed to meet the needs of the majority; those who require to find as many books as possible relevant to their specialist interests. The *Author Union Catalogue* will be the fullest separate listing in print of eighteenth-century printed books, including the cross-references to the Bodleian and University of Cambridge catalogues. The *Subject Catalogue* is a new and unique listing of the titles of eighteenth-century printed books, every title being certain of finding a file. Not only are entries confused but many are missing.

which it has been extracted, adds a new dimension to eighteenth-century studies.

But bibliographies to be truly useful must have a high level of accuracy. Both prospectus and introduction assure the reader that attention to detail has been a guiding principle: "All apparent variants in imprint and format data in each catalogue have been observed and included as possible variant editions"; "author headings have been verified in DNB, NCC, and other basic reference works"; "in listing the editions of any work held in more than one of the libraries every different form of edition has been enumerated separately even if the variation was very minor"; "Number of parts or volumes, format, other works bound in, transcriptions and imperfections (impf) are also given".

The level of accuracy a reader can expect from this work may be gauged from the prospectus and the introduction. In the prospectus a specimen page from the entry for Samuel Johnson's *London*. Since this is also the sample entry chosen to explain procedures in the introduction, the compilers presumably consider it typical. Item A under "How to use the Catalogue" states that: "To obtain all possible locations and editions, all cross-references, and all possible authors, editors, etc. listed in the title, must be consulted". Applying this procedure to the sample entry, one first looks up "JOHN, Samuel L.L.D.-D. Single Works - London 1709-1784", keeping in mind that "the basis of the catalogue" is "a computer file of eighteenth-century items in the published catalogue of the British Library and the first two supplements, to which new editions and locations have been added from Oxford, Cambridge, and the third supplement to the BL catalogue. The initial entry is not the first London edition (1738) as might be expected, or even the second edition of the same date which begins the heading in the British Library's *General Catalogue* (GK). Instead, the first entry is the Dublin 8th (1738) found at the head of the list of editions in the first supplement of GK. The only location given is Bodley; the reader must consult "JUVENALIS" to find the BL copy, where Bodley's copy is not listed.

The second entry under "JOHN, Samuel" is the first London edition with all three locations, even though the BL copy appears only under the *Juvenal* heading in GK. But on turning to "JUVENALIS" the BL copy is there also, while the Bodley copy has been lost. Two identical entries appear for the second edition with locations at Bodley only, although GK lists a copy under the author and under *Juvenal*. The BL copy shows up under "JUVENAL", but there is no indication that one of the second editions in Bodley is in fact an Edinburgh piracy. Although the fourth edition (1739) appears in GK under Johnson only, the Bodley copy is listed under author in the *Author Union Catalogue*; the BL copy is listed under "JUVENAL". Two *satires* (1759) appears in the first GK supplement under both headings but here only under "JUVENAL". Finally, in p. 1784 8th is listed with a cross-reference to "JUVENAL", but since the title is not given, as it is in GK, it may take some time to discover that "A. Persil Flaccus . . . L. Pmtel . . . J. Juvenal . . . Brewster" contains *London* and the *Vanity of human wishes*. Have all of the copies of *London* been discovered after this elaborate cross-checking? According to David Foxon's bibliography, *English Verse 1700-1780*, there are copies of the Dublin 8th (1738) at Cambridge and at London, third edition (1738), at Oxford.

There are not a large of difficulties in the London entry and it is not an isolated case. In the entry for Susanna Constantine, for example, the sequence of titles given under her maiden name seems not to be alphabetic (this is a frustrating feature of the catalogue, as one must scan every entry to be certain of finding a title). Not only are entries confused but many are missing.

The attempt to conflate three different catalogues (governed by widely different cataloguing practices) on the basis of hopelessly impractical attempts to create error and ambiguity. Perhaps if the reader also takes to heart item B under "How to use the Catalogue", then much of the confusion might disappear: "Identification of author headings in the original university catalogues will be facilitated by references to the variations between the cataloguing practices of these libraries and the British Library." I wonder how many regular users of the BL could explain how anonymous books are catalogued, and how many would have any idea how this problem is handled in Oxford and Cambridge? Working through this one entry was vastly time-consuming.

The *Subject Catalogue* is a much more intellectually demanding project. Any attempt to reduce to manageable size, within a subject framework, the prodigious resources of the British Library for the study of eighteenth-century Great Britain and its dependent territories, is heroic, but sadly, the dreams of those who have argued for a systematic retrospective subject-index to the British Library *General Catalogue*, have not been fulfilled here, and may have been seriously impaired.

Take the first section in Volume 1, 010-019. Bibliographies and catalogues. Consultation of DNB (which is stated to have been used) would have prevented two Thomes Osbornes, two John Walshes, and two Paines from conflation (John Walsh the Elder apparently was responsible for five posthumous music titles, a conspicuous and maddening feature throughout the catalogue, where frequently leaves the subject area of the catalogue surrounded in mystery: e.g. O'BRIEN, Catherine; O'BRIEN, OLDFY; William; O'BRIEN, PECK; Francis; *Autism*; *Chalogue*. Sometimes the epithet suggests what the catalogue might concern (e.g. PRICHARD, Bookseller), but OSBORNE, Joseph Ironmonger in St. James's Market published a *Catalogue* of new houses. The principle of double classification sometimes applies, sometimes not. Thus, William Marsden's *Chalogue . . . Dictionaries* appears in 017 (General subject catalogues) but not in 019 (General dictionary catalogues) - though it does appear in 413 (Polyglot dictionaries, which it is not). Samuel Paterson has two numismatic auction catalogues at 737 (Numismatics & sigilography), but he does not appear in 017.

It is not clear what principles governed the attribution of subject classification for this project. In the first place, Dewey does not fit eighteenth-century books, and, in the second place, subject classification is difficult enough with the book in hand, but with titles only the difficulties are insurmountable. Yet, one would have thought that the *General Catalogue* entry for Thomas Baxter's *The circle square* (1732) suggested 515 (Geometry), rather than 513 (Arithmetic). And does *The art of life* (an anonymous poem of 1737) really belong in 214 (Theology) and 871 (Latin poetry)? *A letter Commemorative to a Member of Clarendon* by W. L., described in the *General Catalogue* with a full title indicating that the author is concerned with the "management of the Navy" gets an entry under 329 (Practical politics) and 239 (Religion) - parochial activities.

Classification 828 (English miscellaneous writings; chapbooks) which happens to be one of three sections in 800 arranged chronologically, is, as might be expected, a large section (occupying 84 pages) though not as large as 821 (Poetry) which benefits from the inclusion of everything in 822 (Drama) written in verse. Slightly larger is 827 (Satire & Humour) with 96 pages; but the user of the catalogue must remember that within each year the arrangement is by GK heading and includes, as an all-sequence in the *Subject Catalogue*, vast numbers of cross-references, the

pettiness of which can only be perceived by consulting the British Library *General Catalogue*. What general principles informed the compilers in deciding what to put in 828? This is a section containing just about everything: Quarles, Dryden, the host of Elizabethan and Jacobean writers, sermons, chapbooks, single sheet verse, political satire, almanacs, proposals, analogies of verse, fiction and essays, and hundreds of entries for which the details provided leave one in utter bewilderment, without recourse to the *General Catalogue*.

And entries quite close to one another can be confusing: on page 3517 there are two entries for the same work entered in the *General Catalogue* under PARSON. The first entry gives the title as . . . *duel*. *Cassock . . . Petticoat*, with the subject classifications 202 and 828; the second entry is under Matthew Pilkington and is given as: *Parson . . . worst*, with the subject classifications 828 and 928. As a piece of ephemeral satire printed on a half-sheet its inclusion in 202 (Miscellaneous Christianity) and 928 (Biography, literature) seems arcane to say the least. Gay's *Fables* might have been 821 (English poetry) or 817 (Satire and humour), but like *Asop*, his loss to decide on where to put Bacon's *Novum organum* it was safe enough. The prize goes to Burton's *Anatomy* - however well you know Dewey you will lose this one: 159 (Psychology, aesthetics - other aspects); astrology; and 824 (English essays). *She stoops to Conquer* is no longer drama (it is 821 - Poetry), and it apparently does not matter where *Dampier voyaged* (it is always 919 - Other areas & worlds).

The Project for Historical Bibliography (PHIB) *Subject Catalogue* has some value, but users would be well advised to restrict their consultation to the narrowest classifications. I recommend the following:

The picture process

By Geoffrey Naylor

BASIL HUNNISSETT

Steel-engraved Book Illustrations in England. 263pp. Scolar Press. £17.50. 0 85967 538 6

Confronted with massive quantities of nineteenth-century English books with steel-engraved illustrations on the reverse shelves of Brighton Public Library, Dr Hunnissett decided to investigate this "Cinderella" of all reproductions, a process, and a thorough study has been produced from his curiosity about the technical processes and artistic background. He has produced a book that will be invaluable to printing specialists and book-collectors, and it should not be neglected by art historians interested in the dissemination of high-quality reproduction in the mid-nineteenth century.

Steel-engraving, once it became technically possible, offered artists both a delicacy and subtlety of tone in the copying of their work, and also, because of the durability of plates which could produce thousands of copies without loss of quality, valuable new commercial opportunities. The market was growing too, with an educated and demanding middle class readership for the novels (such as the *Keepsake*) which were so fashionable at the time. Supply, demand and taste, the steel-engraved book a specialogue in the second quarter of the century.

Dr Hunnissett looks at the painters whose work was often specially executed with the engraver in mind - they include Turner, David Roberts and Clarkson Stoddard - and at the highly skilled and prosperous engravers themselves, as well as at the machinery they used. He has given us a densely-

documented study, sometimes made a little ponderous by the quotation of insignificant texts but often picking out on useful and unfamiliar details, such as a first-rate technical description from Dickens's *All the Year Round* of 1856, given in fine detail. Collectors who already know the quality of these books will find some invaluable information here, but the illustrations in this volume inevitably convey little of the richness of the medium; reproduction by practically any modern process is virtually impossible, and the greys of photographic reproduction used here do not do the subject the justice it has at last received in Dr Hunnissett's text.

The special issue of *Aquarius* "In honour of MacDiarmid", besides its normal complement of new poems and reviews, carries an article by G.S. Fraser, a speech by W.R. Aitken. On editing the Complete Poems of Hugh MacDiarmid, an interview with the poet in Dublin in 1978, and eight testimonies by Scottish poets to their own Scottishness or lack of it. Douglas Dunn, the guest editor, had intended these last to be answers to specific questions, such as the role played by Hugh MacDiarmid's poetry in the contemporary Scottish imagination. In the event, the only question most of the poets replied to was that concerning their own national identity. As an anthology of opinions it seems very much what one could expect. A certain liveliness of approach arises from the poets having a rare chance to blow their own trumpets, to make a lot of noise without having to answer for the consequences. Alan Bold kicks off uncomfortably coyly - "What does it feel like to be a Scottish poet? That is the question. Well, perhaps it's not the ultimate ontological question but it's the question put to me by you, my esteemed colleague . . .". The tone is irresponsibly chummy, in such a context. It makes one see the relevance of Douglas Dunn's remark that "as political nationalism has moved into realms of reality and possibility, literary nationalism, at one time more conspicuous than any other, has declined in force".

The most serious and thought-provoking parts of *Aquarius* are those provided by Dunn himself. He has serious reservations about MacDiarmid and his influence, though he admits its overriding importance. He says that among his feelings of gratitude to MacDiarmid, of sadness that so great a writer should now be dead, he also feels a sense of relief at his passing. "We might", he says, "if we are lucky enough, shift MacDiarmid a little, and make room for ourselves to breathe." Dunn worries at the question of MacDiarmid's status as a national poet like Burns:

Cultural heroism was a consequence of his beliefs and practices. To be generally acknowledged as a hero of that culture is another matter. What culture? Who defined it? MacDiarmid did. To what extent then is he a hero of his own definitions? How true are these definitions when tested against reality? Answering that leads to, a discovery that his vision is inconvenient. That is, it tries to be reality, not to accommodate itself to it.

This "inconvenience" - it is a very good word for it - the first major obstacle we encounter when we try to evaluate MacDiarmid's poetry.

The two books under review tackle the question in diametrically opposite

POETRY

The inconvenient vision

By Anthony Conran

Aquarius Number 11

In Honour of Hugh MacDiarmid 126pp. Eddie S. Linden, Flnt 3, Sutherland Avenue, London, W.9. £1.50.

P.H. SCOTT & A. C. DAVIS.

The Age of MacDiarmid

268pp. Mainstream. £7.95.

0 906391 12 1

ANN EDWARDS BOUTELLE:

Thistle and Rose

A Study of Hugh MacDiarmid's Poetry

258pp. Lothian, Midlothian: Mac-

Donald. £12.50.

0 904265 25 0

When Hugh MacDiarmid's monumental *Complete Poems 1920-76* was published by Martin Brian and O'Keefe in 1978, it received little in the way of serious critical appraisal, not least, perhaps, because the TLS was temporarily out of action. MacDiarmid was arguably the most important Scottish poet since Yeats - it is certainly the largest - so that the lack of celebration was no small omission. This is particularly true because of the public nature of so much of MacDiarmid's work. He was many poets in one - a revival of Scots, mystic, political prophet, satirist, a lyricist of supreme tenderness, an ornate fashioner of bawdy, a de-ligher in jargon; but one thing he was more constantly than anything else a writer who used poetry where other mortals rose to journalism. In the peculiar context of Scotland in the mid-twentieth century he never ceased to be a public poet, often (paradoxically) in almost complete isolation and grinding poverty. It is that the so-called *Collected Poems* of 1962 was in many ways the real *MacDiarmid* did. To what extent then is he a hero of his own definitions? How true are these definitions when tested against reality? Answering that leads to, a discovery that his vision is inconvenient. That is, it tries to be reality, not to accommodate itself to it.

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Secrets and stratagems

By Grevel Lindop

PATRIC DICKINSON

Winter Hostages

14pp. 0 904533 48 4

GEORFFREY GRIGSON

Twists of the Way

14pp. 0 904533 50 6

JOHN FULLER

The January Divan

12pp. 0 904533 51 4

Manchester Press, 2 Taylor's Hill, Ealing, Herts.

50p (plus 20p postage and packing)

A group of short poems is often at its best in a pamphlet. The quieter poems are less likely to slide off, unperceived, into the thickets, and sheer brevity can give a sense of psychological space, implicitly inviting the reader to savour, reading slowly and repeatedly, rather than hasten on to find out what lies ahead. The Manchester Press adds to these virtues some of its own: flawless printing (not one misprint in the three pamphlets reviewed here) and a tasteful, scrupulous attention to design.

My working is more silent than the sleep of an owl. More secret than the first and last Words between body and soul.

There is a hint, de la Mare-like, romanticism about this which readers will either dislike or enjoy. I like it and regret only that, apart from the chilling last poem, "Secrets", nothing else in the collection matches it in economy, suggestiveness and clarity of outline. *Secrets* is a key word for Patric Dickinson: most of the poems concern the hidden, the private, or else "marvellous" you can see / And yet you can't, / Like death or love".

Yet surprisingly, his poetic purposes tend to give themselves up a little too easily, arrested by a damaging nervousness about the creative process. A love poem, "On Golden Cap", states its strong central image with uncompromising simplicity -

I saw you once On the top of Golden Cap In a clear spring full moon With a parrot

- then backs down, admitting "This means nothing to anyone else". True, that problem of meaning is then explored; but Mr Dickinson

surrenders too easily. Neither Wordsworth nor Hardy, who were adept at conveying such moments in their resonance and poignancy, would have felt it vulgar to tell us a little more, sharing other details so the experience might live. There are vivid lines in all these poems: the fictional vitality of Tennyson's Maud makes her "A figure, a heartbeat held / Like a seed in a paragon's sunlight"; the timescale of a world threatened by nuclear war is "only a Now / Precarious as a peacock / In a ring of alley cats". But somehow a dimension is missing.

Geoffrey Grigson's *Twists of the Way* is well-titled. The poems' images of sinuous curves (ranging from the "Salience / Undulation of an Indian, well-to-do" to "Brown monks / Curving / To their knees") matches the carefully devised syntax and logic with which Mr Grigson stalks his poetic prey - a "Rich Scholarly Bachelor", for example, to whose funeral "I myself, yes / It is mean, but they would / Be meaningless, have / Sent no red roses". The poet dodges and circles, and the reader follows, learning the mazy patterns. There's a curious pleasure, intellectual and sensual, in the cascade of metaphors and images, seen deliberately casual they grapple themselves to the memory with remarkable

tenuity. A Grigson poem is a kind of burr: it will stick, whether or not one particularly likes it. *Twists of the Way* is a characteristic piece of work: full of colour, slightly eccentric, edgily satirical. There are painfully effective portraits of the bachelor, don married to his "medieval foundation", and in "Thin-White Reclines" *Thin White Poems He Has Written* of the dedicated academic poet:

He reclines so pleased with himself. They are clapping themselves. Such loyalty.

As if to say We are the poems of Thin White.

If Mr Grigson's own poems sometimes seem a little too pleased with themselves, no doubt that is all part of the strategy.

In *The January Divan* John Fuller's poems and George Szirtes's drawings complement each other well, making up a kind of Istanbul notebook. The drawings are sharp and sketchy, the poems mostly present closely-observed visual detail. Some of the work falls into the trap of decorative orientalism, which John Fuller's love of the fantastic has made especially tempting, although there are glimpses of the harsher aspects of modern Turkey: a man

stands in the street "all day in the mud / With ten bedsteads against a railing / They are for sale, but no one buys"; and there is "a tank by the Galata Bridge . . . mysteriously / Angled on its concrete eminence", positioned "As though by a boy kneeling with a toy / Breathing heavily, placing it exactly". But mostly the poems focus on the wonderful strangeness (for a Western European) of the old Istanbul: the mosque-like brass domes on the shoshine boys' polish-flasks, "On which one seems to step / As if to threaten Bileuscu", or the Victorian British grandfather dock in the Sultanahmet Mosque with its Arabic numerals "like closed umbrellas".

Some of the poems are tinged with "Martial" imagery, which brings the usual defects and virtues: the "Pipes of bones, and wigs and shawls of tripes, / The mosaics are accurate, suitably beautiful and horrid, / 'begin to practise their headstamps' attended by the poet's knowing countenance." Don't we recognise the presence? From our own belated but self-consciously "silly" cleverness - conceit in more senses than one. The poems are best where they avoid firm conclusions and rest on the observed surface, accepting that the inner meaning of much that is seen remains unknown.

A psychological theory like this is useful in a critic as a way of establishing distance from his subject. But - aside from one's judgment as to the truth or falsity of the psychology - isn't MacDiarmid's wrestling with Jacob's angel part of the reason we read him? As with Wordsworth or Blake or Lawrence, isn't his "inconvenience" a source of his power?

It is a small doubt about a book which was clearly very much needed. Apart from Kenneth Buthlay's short monograph of 1964, this is the first systematic attempt to explore the whole range of MacDiarmid's work, to show the pattern in the carpet. Boutelle's centrepiece is a long and convincing exposition of *A Drunk Man*, section by section, as a poetic unity based on struggle and final acceptance of paradox. She shows where the poetry is helped by the strength of Lallans, and where it is not. From that point of view, her book makes a good case against those who think that using Scots is somehow cheating - "Would this be as good if it was put into the King's English?" they say as though that disposal of the matter. The case is marred only by excessive analysis along the lines of "The lovely long vowels, the weaving pattern of the 'Is', the ominous intrusion of 'r' . . .".

About the later poems, particularly the long ones in "synthetic English", Boutelle is less illuminating in general, though very perceptive where she does find specific passages to praise. She seems to disagree with her father, Professor Boutelle, on including so much of what she is obviously bored and irritated by. But I came to MacDiarmid's work as an outsider largely through his English end near-English poems; and while little of it is an indispensable as the Scots, there are still great moments, and much that is intellectually stimulating. Perhaps the long poems like *In Memoriam James Joyce* should be regarded as creative commonplace books, scraps of poetic meteorology, rather than the epic MacDiarmid apparently liked to call them.

I could imagine myself writing poetry that in some way or ways could compare with those others, but not with MacDiarmid's lyrics. Indeed I think that for many years those lyrics (and some Gaelic songs) were red lights stopping my way of poetry. Some years after 1935, when I was invalided

back from North Africa. Christy-opher and I argued through most of the night and early hours of the morning about his lyrics. And I remember asking him who he thought he was or what did he think had been given to him when he hoped to write greater poetry than those lyrics. I think I wore him down.

I don't think many people could write that last sentence about MacDiarmid.

The other way to approach MacDiarmid's "inconvenience" is exemplified by Ann Edwards Boutelle's new study. She is the academic critic, the reader who will not let herself be distracted by what she calls "excitement, propaganda and brouhaha". She aims, she says, at "letting my passions respond to the poetry, but calling frequently on standing reason to avoid embroilment in issues other than the poetry". In fact, though her book certainly does concentrate on the poems, and offers many insights into them, she is not simply the detached literary critic that her words might imply. *Twistle and Rose* is a reading of MacDiarmid's poetry, yes, but also a psychological and psychoanalytical study of his work, and by Kenneth Buthlay on the allusions and difficulties of MacDiarmid's second sequence in Scots, *To Circumjack Censorious*. There are also studies of his controversy with Edwin Muir, of his nationalism and his politics.

What sticks in the memory, though, is an argument on a much deeper level than any of these, one that MacDiarmid had with Scotty MacLean, the other great Scottish poet of the twentieth century, an argument that touches the springs of inspiration in both men. MacLean says that in the 1930s his admiration for MacDiarmid's lyrics (together with the supreme union of poetry and music in certain Gaelic songs) inhibited his own work and made him despair of any poetry that either he or anyone else could write. The best of Eliot or Yeats and *A Drunk Man* itself were accessible as those lyrics were not.

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